



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

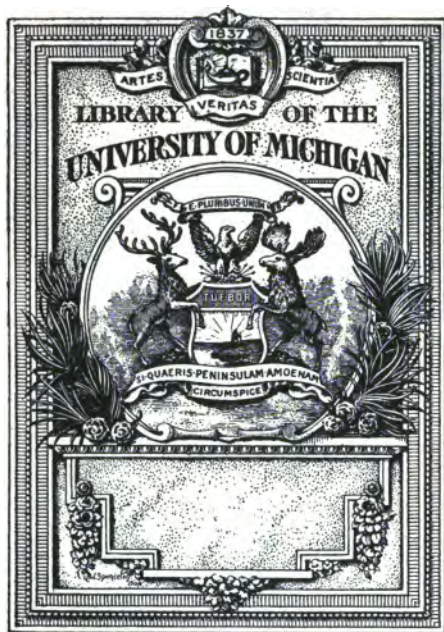
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



823.
D64
178



OLD PLAYS.

VOLUME THE ELEVENTH.

CONTAINING

ANDROMANA, OR THE MERCHANT'S WIFE, BY
JAMES SHIRLEY.

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH, BY THOMAS
MIDDLETON.

GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

THE CITY NIGHT-CAP, BY ROBERT DAVENPORT.

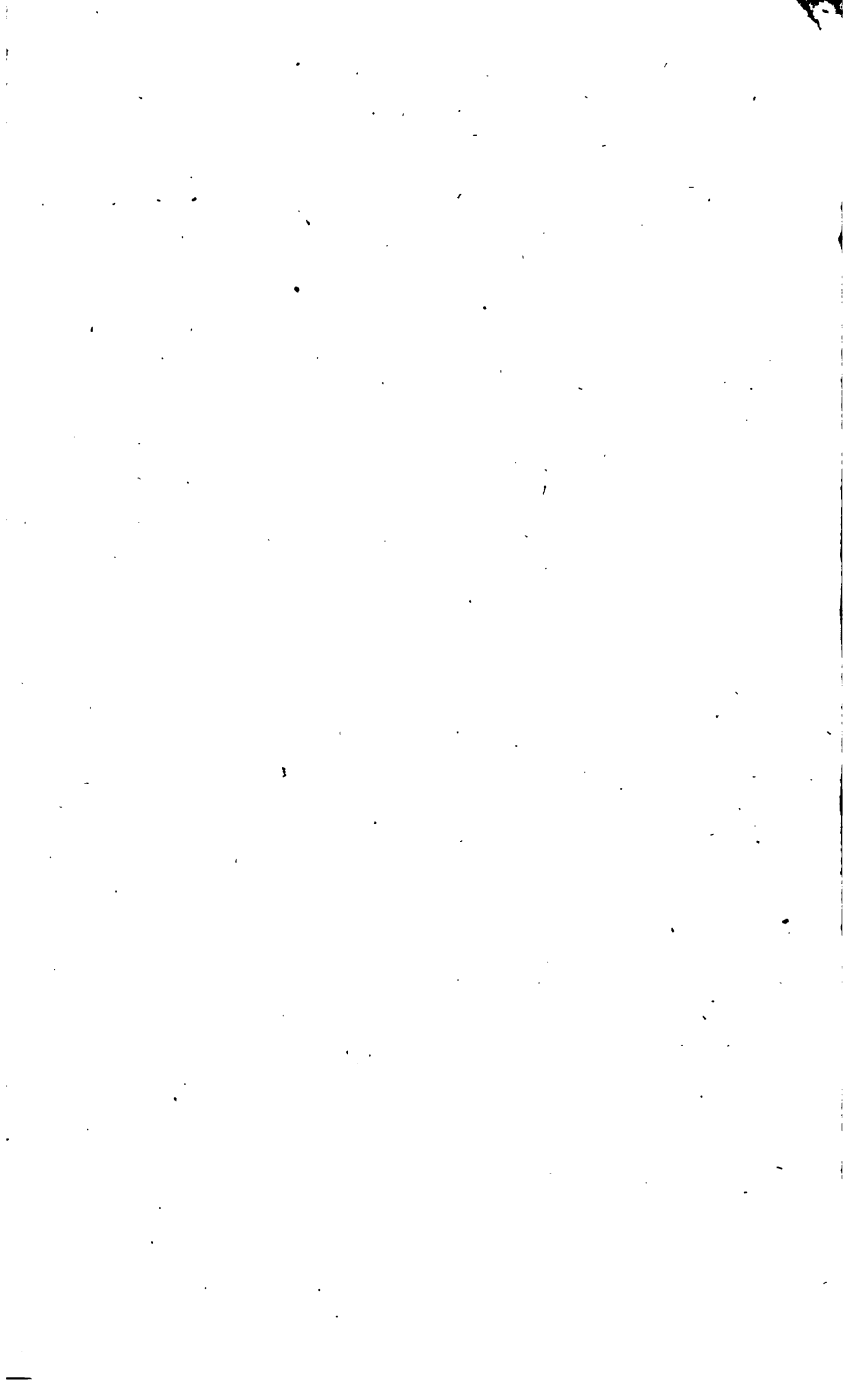
THE PARSON'S WEDDING, BY THOMAS KILLEGREW.



Robert Dodsley

A SELECT
COLLECTION
OF
1342
OLD PLAYS.
IN TWELVE VOLUMES.
THE SECOND EDITION,
CORRECTED AND COLLATED WITH THE OLD COPIES.
WITH
NOTES CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.
VOLUME XI.

L O N D O N,
PRINTED BY H. HUGHS;
FOR J. DODSLEY, PALL MALL.
MDCCLXXX.



A N D R O M A N A ;

O R,

The Merchant's Wife.

VOL. XI.

B

2 4-12 33 Wm. G. B. Reed

THIS play was printed in the year 1660, and hath the Letters J. S. in the title-page. Chetwood, in his *British Theatre*, p. 47. says, That it was revived in 1671, when a prologue was spoken before it, in which were the following lines :

“ ’Twas Shirley’s muse that labour’d for its birth,
 “ Tho’ now the fire rests in the silent earth.”

The plot is taken from the story of Plangis, in Sir Philip Sydney’s *Arcadia*. The same subject had before been made use of by Beaumont and Fletcher, in their play of *Cupid’s Revenge*.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

EPHORBAS, *King of Iberia.*

PLANGUS, *his Son.*

EUBULUS,

ANAMEDES, } *three Lords, and Counsellors to the King.*

RINATUS,

INOPHILUS, *Son to Rinatus, and Friend to the Prince.*

ZOPIRO,

NICETES, } *Captains.*

ARAMNES,

ARTESIO, *an informing Courtier.*

ANDROMANA, *a Merchant's Wife.*

LIBACER, *her Servant.*

Messenger.

Captains and Soldiers.

The Scene IBERIA.

ANDRO-

{ 5 }

ANDROMANA;

OR,

THE FATAL AND DESERVED END

OF

DISLOYALTY AND AMBITION.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Nicetes and Aramnes.

Nicetes.

I Have observ'd it too;
But the cause is as unknown to me,
As actions done in countries
Not found out yet.

Aramnes.

Some wench, my life to a brass farthing:

Nicetes.

As like as may be:
We foldiers are all given that way; especially

B 3

When

When our blood boils high, and pulses beat
 Alarms to Cupid's battles; we're apter
 To sally on a young flaming girl,
 Than on an enemy that braves it before our trenches.

Aramnes.

I ask it not to know his privacies;
 For if his freedom doth not acquaint me with them,
 Let them be secret still—yet I could wish
 An opportunity to tell him, a little circumspection
 Would be handsome, and set a gloss upon all.
 Times might be chosen of less public notice:
 It looks so poorly in a prince to be thus careless
 Of his own affairs: men do so talk on't—
 Here comes Inophilus; if any body knows,
 It must be he.

Enter Inophilus.

Inophilus.

Your servant, captains. Saw you the prince to-day?

Nicetes.

Not we: we hop'd to hear of him from you.

Inophilus.

'Tis strange a man adorn'd with so much
 Wisdom, should on the sudden fall off from the
 Care of his own fame! I am his friend, and so
 I know are you; but to speak plainly to you,
 He's grown my wonder now, as much as other mens,
 I, that have found a sweetness in his company
 Beyond whatever lovers dream of in a mistress,
 That as he spoke, methought have smell'd the air
 Perfum'd; nor could have wish'd a joy greater
 Than living with him, next those of heav'n;
 And those preferr'd the more, because I knew
 Plangus would be there.

I say, even I, of late, am grown out of love
 With any thing that's mortal; since I have found
 Plangus so far beneath (I will not say
 My expectations) but the assurances
 All good men had of future gallantry.
 He's melancholy now, and hath thrown off
 The spirit which so well became him; and all that

THE MERCHANT'S WIFE.

Sweetness which bewitch'd men's hearts,
Is grown so ragged, so incompas'd to all commerce,
Men fear he'll shortly quarrel with himself.
Nay more, he doth not answer the fondness
Of his father's love with half that joy
He us'd to do.

Aramus.

'Tis now about a week I have observ'd
This alteration ; it shakes him like an ague
Once in two days ; but holds him longer
Than a fit o'th' gout. They whisper about the court
As if the king had chid him for it,
And now at length found his haunts.

Inophilus.

A poor discovery ! Who might not find 'em out,
That would be so uncivil ? I was about
To follow him, but thought it an ignoble way,
Beneath the name of friendship, and so desisted.
About four days ago, meeting him i'th' long gallery,
I ask'd him how he did ? Taking me by the hand,
He wrung it, and after a sigh or two, told me,
“ Not very well — ” But he had business, and so we
parted,

I saw him not again in twenty hours after ;
And then I ask'd him where he'd been so long ?
He told me (as if he was ashamed
To deny me such a poor request) I must not know :
And when I told him, his often absence was observ'd ;
Is it ? (saith he) I cannot help it ; but it shall
No more be so ; and at the last he stole away ;
Since when I saw him not.

Nicetes.

O this wicked peace ! Inophilus,
Is there no hopes of war ?
To lye at home to see our armours rust ;
We could keep the prince sober and merry too,
If he would but exchange his court for a camp.

Inophilus.

The king is old, and doats upon his son ;
Is loth to venture him to danger :

ANDROMANAID.

Yet at this time there is occasion.
The Argives have refus'd to pay their tribute,
And are, for certain, preparing for invasion :
Some say they have got into Iberia already.

Aramnes.

Nay, then there's hopes :
If we could but find the prince with a buff coat again,
I should be once more merry. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Enter Ephorbas the king, Rinatus, Eubulus, and Aramnes, three lords.

Ephorbas,

SEE the ambassadors entertain'd
With such an evenness as should be us'd to men
We neither fear nor love ; let neither
Too much obsequiousness teach them insolency,
Nor any ill usage brand us with incivility :
Stay you, Rinatus. [*He sighs.*]

[*Exeunt Eubulus and Aramnes.*]

—Open thy bosom, and receive torrents of sorrow,
That lie like rocks of lead upon my soul ;
Honest Rinatus, experience bids me trust thee
With a mighty secret. Thou canst not chuse
But know, my son, of late, is much retir'd.
I do not like that youth should be thus melancholy :
Let them enjoy themselves ; for age will come,
Whose impotency will deny all pleasures.
I do believe he loves me. Hah ?

Rinatus.

Yes, doubtless, better than sick men health ;
Or those who are pen'd up in darkness
Love the sun.

Ephorbas.

I speak not as if I thought he did not ;
For thou know'st I humour him, afford him
Liberty enough ; I never chide him, nor express

The

THE MERCHANT'S WIFE.

9

The least dislike of any action. Am not I a gentle father?
Methinks were I a son again to such a father,
I should not think he liv'd too long; should'st thou,
Rinatus?

Rinatus.

No more doth he, upon my soul:
One command of yours would make him venture upon
Light'ning, nay almost make him act a sin;
A thing he fears to name.

Epherbas.

I do believe thee;
But yet, methinks, should he be grown so impious,
There might be found excuses.
A crown is a temptation; especially so near one:
'Tis not with princes as with other sons;
And I am told too——
Hath not my hand the palsy?
Doth a crown become grey hairs? To be a king
Might make some men forswear all conscience.
But I know Plangus hath far nobler thoughts——
And yet an empire might excuse a parricide,

Rinatus.

Sir! sure you are a stranger to your son;
For, give me leave to say, your fears are vain;
So great a virtue as the prince's,
Cannot anticipate his hopes by any sin.
Honour and duty have been acquainted with him
Now too long to be divorc'd.
Some sycophants there are
(Such creatures still will haunt the court) I know
Love not the prince, because he loves not them.
Sir, shut your ears to them, they will betray you
To your ruin. Jealousy's a disease
Should be below a king, as that which seizeth
On the basest spirits. Oh, shut it from your soul!
One may read in story what dire effects
The fury hath brought forth. Kings make away
Their only sons, and princes their fathers;
And when they have done, they may despair at leisure.

Epherbas.

I do not think Plangus

Hath

Hath plots, or on my crown, or me ;
 He was virtuous always; and is still, I hope :
 But why is he so much from court then, and alone too ?
 I do but ask the question.

Rinatus.

It can be no design, believe me, sir;
 For crowns are won by other courses.
 Aspirers must grow popular, be hedg'd about
 With their confederates; then would he flatter you,
 Be jolly still, as if no melancholy thought were in him.
 A guilty conscience would then teach him policy,
 And he would seek to take suspicion from all his carriages;
 Innocence makes him careless now.

Ephorbas.

Thou hast almost resolv'd me,
 The tempest in my soul is almost laid,
 And wants but time to calm it.
 Youth hath its whimsies, nor are we
 To examine all their paths too strictly.
 We went awry ourselves when we were young.

Rinatus.

Sir !

Ephorbas.

Thou may'st be gone, Rinatus.

[*Exit Rinatus.*]

SCENE III.

Ephorbas solus.

THE blessing of an honest servant !
 This Rinatus is truer unto me.
 He loves the king as well as I Ephorbas ;
 And may I live but to reward him !
 For he's too honest for a court.

Enter

THE MERCHANT'S WIFE. ii

Enter Artesio.

How now, Artesio? thy looks speak strong amazement;
I am with child to hear the news: Pr'ythee
Be quick in the delivery.

Artesio.

The prince, an't please your majesty—

Ephorbas.

What of him, Artesio?

Artesio.

I have observ'd is much retir'd of late.

Ephorbas.

So have I too; this is no news.

Artesio.

And I can whisper in your ear the cause.
'Twas chance, no policy of mine, betray'd his privacies;
Ill offices are not the engines I desire to rise by;
Only love to the young prince makes me reveal them.

Ephorbas.

Nay, nay, without apology;
If it were treason, it should not go down
The sooner for all the gilded preparation.
Nor am I of so feminine a humour,
As to mistrust affection delivered bluntly:
Plain meaning should be plainly told;
Bad wares may have false lights, good can abide the day,

Artesio.

But I know
The nature of my office;
Though kings still hug suspicion in their bosoms,
They hate the causers; love to hear secrets too,
Yet the revealers still fare the worse,
Being either thought guilty of ends or weakness;
And so esteem'd by those they tell them to,
Either unfit or dangerous to be trusted.
Perhaps, sir, when the prince and you are friends again,
You'll tell me, that had my love been real,
I should have whisper'd the prince's errors to himself—

Ephorbas.

Without a syllable of prologue more,
Or I shall verify your fears.

Artesio.

Artesio.

In this brave city (take it as brief as may be)
 There lives a beauty, fit to command
 Them that command the world,
 And might be Alexander's mistress, were he yet alive,
 And had added empires as large as his desires :
 She's but a private merchant's wife ;
 Yet the prince is so far gravell'd in her affection,
 I fear—

Ephorbas.

Then there is hopes I may recall him :
 Love is a childish evil, though the effects
 Are dangerous. A prince's errors grown publick,
 Will be scandalous. Poor boy ! perhaps
 The jealous husband may commit a murder ;
 I would not have him cut off so young :
 Love should be princes recreation, not their business,
 What physick must we give him for his cure ?

Artesio.

I dare not counsel you ;
 But in my poor judgment some gentle
 Fatherly persuasions will work upon so good a nature.

Ephorbas.

Could'st thou but possibly effect
 How I might take him napping ?

Artesio.

That is beyond my skill :
 But I can shew you the house, and time
 He walks from hence in, which will be
 About an hour hence ; for then her husband
 Comes home from the Ryalto.

Ephorbas.

Time will not tarry for a king ; let's go.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E

SCENE IV.

Inophilus.

WHat is become of this young prince? or where
Doth he bestow himself? Doth he walk invisible?
Where have I been to look him? the horses
Are in the stables, his page and I at home too,
That us'd to be as inseparable companions.—

*Enter Nicetes, Aramnes.**Aramnes.*

Well met, gentlemen! where is the hermit Plangus?

Nicetes.

We cannot tell, nor have we been to seek him.
If at the court, we should hear presently;
If not, we might be too officious in his search,
And our enquiry might make his absence
But so much the more notorious;
And I'm confident he's well:
His virtue guards him still from all mischances.

Inophilus.

Though his company's the dearest thing I love,
Yet for his good I could digest his absence,
But that I doubt a mighty mischief might spring
From this small grain of indiscretion.
The king is old, and there are knaves about the court,
That (if he knew it not) would tell him so:
And men conscious to themselves of a deficiency,
Are still most jealous of a growing worth.
Perhaps a thinking father (for plodding
Is old age's sickness) may take notice of
His son's retirement, and misconstrue it so:
Nothing is impossible—Heaven send it otherwise!

Aramnes.

This care becomes you, sir;
But I dare swear 'tis needless: the king
Is but an ill dissembler; and had he
But the least thought of such a thing, he'd hide it

Lest

Love is above these vanities: Should
 The innocent thing my husband take thee here,
 He could not spite me but by growing jealous;
 And jealousy's black effect would be a cloister
 Perhaps to kill me too: But that's impossible,
 I cannot die so long as Plangus loves me.
 Yet say this piece of earth should play the coward,
 And fall at some unlucky stroke,
 Love would transport my better half to its center,
 Plangus' heart, and I should live in him.
 But, sir, you have a fame to lose, which should be
 A prince's only care and darling,
 Which should have an eternity beyond his life:
 If he should take that from you, I should
 Be kill'd indeed.

Plangus.

Why dost thou use
 These arguments to bid me go,
 Yet chain me to thy tongue, while the angel-like
 Musick of thy voice entrans my thirsty ears,
 Charms up my fears to immobility?
 'Tis more impossible for me to leave thee,
 Than for this carcase to quit away its grave-stone,
 When it lies destitute of a soul to inform it.
 Mariners might with far greater ease
 Hear whole shoals of Sirens singing,
 And not leap out to their destruction,
 Than I forsake so dangerous a sweetness.

Andromana.

I will be dumb then.

Plangus.

I will be deaf first. I've thought a way now,
 I'll run from hence, and leave my soul behind me:
 It shall be so—and yet it shall not neither:
 What! shall a husband banish a prince his house
 For fear? A husband! 'tis but an airy title;
 I will command there shall be no such thing,
 And then Andromana is mine, or his, or any man's
 She will herself. These ceremonies
 Fetter the world, and I was born to free it.

Shall

THE MERCHANT'S WIFE. 17

Shall man, that noble creature, be afraid
Of words, things himself made ?
Shall sounds, a thing of seven small letters, give
Check to a prince's will ?

Andromana.

Did you not promise me, dear sir ?
Have you not sworn too, you would not stay beyond the
time ?
Have oaths no more validity with princes ?
Let me not think so.

Plangus.

Come, I will go, thou shalt not ask in vain ;
But let us kiss at parting, it may be our last, perhaps.
—I cannot now move one foot, though all the furies
Should whip me forward with their snakes.
Woman, thou stol'st my heart, just now thou stol'st it.
A cannon bullet might have kiss'd my lips
And left me as much life.

[The king having listen'd comes in softly.]

—Are we betray'd ?
What art ? speak, or resolve to die:

King.

A well-wisher of the prince's.

Plangus.

The king ?—It cannot be !

[He starts.]

King.

Though thou hast thrown all nature off,
I cannot what's my duty. Ungracious boy !
Had'st been the offspring of a sinful bed,
Thou might'st have claim'd adultery as inheritance ;
Lust would have been thy kinsman, and what enormity
Thy looser life could have been guilty of,
Had found excuse in an unnatural conception.
Pr'ythee hereafter seek another father :
Ephorbas cannot call him son, that makes lust his deity.
Had I but known—(but we are hoodwink'd still
To all mischances) I should have had a son ;
That would make it his study to embrace corruption,
And take delight in unlawful sheets,

VOL. XI.

C

I would

I would have hugg'd a monster in mine arms
 Before thy mother.—Good o heavens!
 What will this world come to at last?
 When princes, that should be the patterns
 Of all virtue, lead up the dance to vice!
 What shall we call our own, when our own wives
 Banish their faith, and prove false to us?
 Have I with so much care promis'd my self
 So pleasing a spring of comfort, and are all
 Those blossoms nipt, and buds burnt up by the fire
 Of lust and sin?—

Have I thus long laboured against
 The billows, that did oppose my growing hopes,
 And must I perish in the haven's mouth?
 No gulph but this to be devoured in?
 Could not youth's inclination find out
 Another rock to split itself upon?
 Had'st thou hugg'd drunkenness, the wit
 Or mirth of company might have excus'd it.
 Prodigality had been a sin a prince
 Might have been proud in, compar'd to this.
 Or had thy greener years incited thee to treason
 And attempt a doubting father's crown,
 It had been a noble vice.

Ambition runs through the veins of princes;
 It brings forth acts great as themselves and it;
 Spurs on to honour, and resolves great things.
 But this, this leachery is such a thing,
 Sin is too brave a name for't. A prince
 (I might say my son, but let that pass)
 And dare to show himself to nought
 But darkness, and black chambers, whose motions
 Like some planet are all excentric,
 Not two hours together in his own sphere,
 The court?—but I am tame to talk thus;
 Begone with as much speed as a coward would
 Avoid his death; and never more presume
 To look upon this woman, this whore,
 Thou losest both thy eyes and me else.

[Plangus is going out, but comes again.]

Sir

Plangus.

Sir, the reverence that I owe my father,
And the injury I have done this gentlewoman,
Had charm'd me up to silence ; but I must
Speak something for her honour :
When I have done, command me to the altar.
Whilst (I confess) you tainted me with sin,
I did applaud you, and condemn myself,
It look'd like a father's care.—But when
You us'd that term of whore to her that stands there,
I would have given ten thousand kingdoms
You had had no more relation to me,
Than hath the northern to the southern pole.
I should have flown to my revenge swifter than lightning.
But I forbear, and pray imagine not what I had done.

King.

Upon my life, she is very handsome.

[*Aside.*

Plangus.

To be a whore is more unknown to her,
Than what is done in the Antipodes ;
She is so pure she cannot think a sin,
Nor ever heard the name to understand it.

King.

No doubt, these private meetings
Were to read her moral lectures, and teach her
Chastity.

Plangus.

Nay, give me leave, sir,
I do not say my addressees have been all so virtuous ;
For whatsoever base desires a flaming beauty
Could kindle in a heart, were all alive in me,
And prompted me to seek some ease, by quenching
Burnings hotter than *Ætna*.
Imagine but a man that had drunk mercury,
And had a fire within his bones,
Whose blood was hotter than the melted ore ;
If he should wish for drink, nay steal it too,
Could you condemn him ?

Ephorbas.

Marry'd, do they say ?

C 2

[*Aside.*
Plangus.

Plangus.

I did endure a heat seas could not cool;
 It would have kill'd a salamander.
 Then, taught both impudence and wit,
 I singled out my foe, us'd all the arts
 That love could think upon, and in the end
 Found a most absolute repulse.

King.

Well, Plangus, youth excuses the first fault,
 But a relapse exceeds all pardon.

[*Exeunt King and Plangus.*]

SCENE IV.

Andromana.

CURST be old age, and he that first number'd four-
 score!

What devil has betray'd us to a floating fool?
 Did I but now promise myself what hopes
 Ambitious thoughts could reach; and shall I sink
 Down to my first foundation without the pleasure of
 A tasted greatness? Death and disgrace!
 I dare provoke the utmost of your malice,
 After the sweetness of some sharp revenge.

Enter Libacer, in haste.

Libacer.

Madam, my master.

Andromana.

You may both hang together.

Libacer.

Why, this it is, if a man should kill his father
 For you, he should be thus rewarded; as soon as
 Your turn's served, I may be hang'd that did it.

Andromana.

Since he is dead; how was it done?

Libacer.

Libacer.

Why, nothing; only as he was taking water
At the Ryalto, his foot slip'd a little,
And he came tumbling in the sea;
Whence he was taken up, but not alive.

Andromana.

Heav'n prospers not these courses,
I see it plainly; let them be acted with as much closeness,
Or to what end soever, they never thrive. *Libacer,*
We are undone, undone; the king hath found
His son here, and I have lost him to eternity.

Libacer.

You women are the shallowest creatures;
You never look beyond the present.
Rome was not built in one day, madam;
Greatness is never sweet that comes too easily.
Should Plangus be a fool now, and obey his father —
Pox o'this virtue, it spoils most men living.
We have hopes yet; revenge is something,
And if my old trade fail not,
Princes are mortal as well as other men;
Yet my soul inspires me with half a confidence
That Leon hath not dy'd in vain. I use to see
As far into mischief as another: I'll go to him,
And if I bring him not within this half hour,
As hot and eager on the scent as e'er he was,
Take me and hang me at my coming home.
—Madam, here is a messenger from court.

[As he is going out he meets Artesio.]

Andromana.

If from thence, I may be bold to ask,
How Plangus, the noblest prince alive, doth?

Artesio.

Madam, as well as soldiers can
That are sick for honour; I suppose by this time
H'ath left the court, and is gone in quest for glory,
Which he intends to ravish from young Argo's brow,
The valiant leader of the Argives' army.

C 3

Andromana.

Andromana.

I'm confident then, fir,
Your business is not to me ; if any body else
Hath sent you, fir, be pleas'd to spare the message,
And tell them, I neither have learn'd the tricks
O'th' court, nor yet intend it: I want no new gowns,
And have heard men forswear themselves
In better language, and to better purpose
Than gaining of a lady's honour.

Artesso.

Madam, my business is from the king,
Who doth intreat you would be pleas'd to blefs
The court this afternoon with your fair presence,
And bring an answer ; I must not stay for one.

[*Exit Art.*

Andromana.

Now we do see an end of all our mischiefs ;
The prince is gone from court, and the king-
Hath sent for us ; Doth not the name
Strike terror to thy curdling blood ?

Libacer.

No, by my troth, not at all :
As far as I see, you're better than you were.
I'll lay my life the old man would turn gamester,
Take my counsel, play deep or not at all :
Not an ace under a kingdom. Your grace,
I hope, will remember your poor friends,

Andromana.

If I do find any such thing,
Let me alone to melt his ice.
Go, get me mourning with all haste.
Let froward fortune do her worst ; I shall
Create my greatness, or, attempting, fall ;
And when I fall, I will deserve my ruin.

[*Exit Lib.*

[*Exit.*

A C T

ACT II. SCENE I.

*Enter Plangus, Nicetes, Aramnes.**Nicetes.*

WHAT, sir, and are you melancholy, when fate
 Hath shower'd a happiness so unexpected on us ?
 This ugly sneaking peace is the soldier's rock
 He splits his fortunes on. Bawdry's a virtue to't.
 Pox o' these beaver-hats, they make one's head ake
 Worse than a cap of steel ; and bear not off a knock
 The tenth part so well.

Plangus.

You're mad for fighting, gentlemen,
 And we shall have enough of it.
 The Argives, fifty thousand strong,
 Have like a whirlwind borne down all before 'em ;
 And I, with thirteen thousand, that remain
 Yet undisbanded of the last expedition,
 Have command to fight that multitude
 Of old tough soldiers : while ours,
 In a month or two, won't have pick'd up that valour
 That in this idle time hath slip't from 'em.
 They have forgot what noise a musket makes ;
 And start if they but hear a drum :
 Are these fellows either enow, or fit,
 On whom a kingdom's safety should be built ?
 Indeed were they to encounter some mistress,
 Or storm a brothel-house, perhaps they'd venture ;
 But for my part, I yield ; nor would I oppose my father :
 If he sees good we perish, I am already sacrific'd ;
 Yet our enemies shall dearly purchase their victory.
 Pray look to your charge, Nicetes, and you
 Aramnes, with all care and speed ; and when you come
 Into the field, then let me see this countenance,
 That frowning smile, and I shall like it,

C 4

I love

I love a man runs laughing upon death—
But we lose time in talk.

[*Ex. Nic. Aram.*]

SCENE II.

Enter Inophilus.

Inophilus.
YOUR fervant, captains. Sir, pray a word with you.

Plangus.
Pr'ythee be short, Inophilus, thou know'st my business.
Inophilus.

Sir, I am mad to see your tameness :
A man bound up by magic is not so still as you ;
Nothing was ever precipitated thus,
And yet refus'd to see it's ruin.

Plangus.
Thou art tedious, I shall not tarry.
Inophilus.

You are made general.
Plangus.

I know it.
Inophilus.

Against the Argives.
Plangus.

So.
Inophilus.

With thirteen thousand men, no more, sir.
Plangus.

I am glad on't, the honour is the greater.
Inophilus.

The danger is the greater ; you will be kill'd, sir,
And lose your army.

Plangus.
Is this all ? I care not.

Inophilus.

Inophilus.

But so do I, and so do all your friends.
 I smell a rat, sir; there's juggling in this business;
 I am as confident of it as I am alive.
 The king might within this twenty-four hours
 Have made a peace on fair conditions.

Plangus.

But dishonourable.

Inophilus.

And would not.
 On a sudden useth the ambassadors scurvily,
 And provokes the Argives, yet himself
 In no posture of defence.

Plangus.

But —

Inophilus.

Pray give me leave, sir.
 After this, you are on a sudden created general,
 And pack'd away with a crowd of unhewn fellows,
 Whose courage hangs as loose about them
 As a slut's petticoats. Sir, he had other spirits
 In the court, created for such perils.
 Excuse me, I know you fear not to meet destruction;
 But where men are sure to perish,
 'Twere well the persons were of less concernment.
 He might have let you staid till you had gather'd
 An army fit for your command, and sent
 Some petty things upon this expedition,
 Whose loss would have been nothing, and of whom
 It might have been recorded in our story
 As an honour, that they died monuments
 Of the king's folly. But let that pass;
 You'll say perhaps, you only have a spirit
 Fit for such undertakings—I wish you had not;
 Your want then would not be half so grievous.
 But here's the prodigy! you must fight them presently.
 Come, 'tis a project put into the king's head
 By some who have a plot on you and him.

Plangus.

It may be so, Inophilus, and I believe
 All this is true you tell me, and it might startle

A man

A man were less resolv'd than I.
 But danger and I have been too long acquainted.
 To shun a meeting now; I am engag'd,
 And cannot any ways come off with reputation.
 Hadst told me this before, perhaps I might
 Have thought on't—and yet I should not neither.
 If the king thinks I am grown dangerous,
 'Tis all one to me which way he takes me from his fears,
 He could not do it handsomer than thus;
 It makes less noise now—
 But come, I must not fear such things, Inophilus:
 The king hath more virtue and honour than
 To do these actions, fit only for guilty souls;
 Nor must I fear when my Inophilus fights by me.

Inophilus.

Troth, sir, for all your compliment,
 If you have no valour but what owes itself to my company,
 You're like to make cold breakfast of your enemies:
 I have other business than to throw away
 My life, when there is so much odds against it:
 I'll stay at home, and pray for you, that's all, sir,

Plangus.

How! wilt not go then, Inophilus?

Inophilus.

The time hath been, I thought it better sport
 To bustle through a bristly grove of pikes;
 When I have courted rugged danger with
 Hotter desires than handsome faces,
 And thought no women half so beautiful
 As bloody gaping wounds:
 But, sir, to go and cast away myself now,
 Would not be gallant, nor an action worth my envy:
 'Tis weakness to make those that seek
 My ruin, laugh at my folly, with jaws stretch'd
 Wider than the gulph that swallows us.
 I know when honour calls me, and when treason
 Counterfeits her voice.

Plangus.

Well, stay at home and freeze,
 And lose all sense of glory in a mistress' arms.

Go,

THE MERCHANT'S WIFE. 17

Go, perish tamely, drunk with sin and peace ;
And may'st thou, since thou dar'st not die with them,
Outlive thy noble friends.

Inophilus.

I thank you, sir, but I cannot be angry.

SCENE III.

Enter Nicetes and Aramnes, with some captains and soldiers.

Nicetes.

Yonder's the bones o'th' army rally'd up
Together, but they look'd rather as if
They came home from being soundly beaten.
Methinks such tatter'd rogues should never conquer,
Victory would look so scurvily among 'em,
They'd so bedaub her, if she wore clean linen.

Captains.

Sir, we wear as sound hearts in these torn
Breeches, as e'er a courtier of them all.
We are not afraid of spoiling our hands for want
Of gloves, nor need we almond-butter when
We go to bed. And though my lieutenant
Is pleased to be a little merry, you shall see us die
As handsomly in these old cloaths as those wear better,
And become our wounds as well, and perhaps
Smell as sweet when we are rotten.

Plangus.

We hope it.—Captains and fellow-soldiers,
We are proud of this occasion to try your valours ;
You shall go no farther than your prince doth,
I'll be no bringer up of rears.
Let not the number of the foe affright you,
The more they are, the more will the honour be.
The lion scorns to prey upon a hare,
Nor is the blinking taper fit to try eagles eyes.
The weight of glory makes our danger light ;

When

12. A N D R O M A N A ; O R,

When victory comes easily, 'tis half a shame
To conquer.

[Soldiers shout, and encounter]

Inophilus.

I'll stay at home and grieve, that so many
Daring souls should die on such advantage.

[Exit *Ino.*

S C E N E I V.

Enter the King, solus.

King.

HER husband dead too! — Fates, let me die,
I am too happy to remain long thus
Without a ruin, great as the height I fell from.
Plangus was my only obstacle, but him I have
Remov'd — But love commanded,
His presence would have countermanded all attempts;
I need not fear his magick at this distance.
His looks and actions were one entire enchantment,
And powerful over a lady's heart.
I sent for her, but she's not come yet.
Who waits without?

Enter Artesia.

Artesia.

There's a mourning lady, sir,
Would speak with the king.

King.

Admit her, and begone.

S C E N E

SCENE V.

Enter Andromana in mourning, with a hood over her face, which she throws up when she sees the king.

King.

SO riseth Phœbus from the gloomy night,
 (While pale-fac'd Dian maketh haste to hide
 Her borrow'd glory in some neighb'ring cloud,
 Envyng the beauty of the new-born day)
 When darkness crowds into the other world.
 Madam, why kneel you? You, at whose name [*She kneels.*
 Monarchs themselves might tremble, and mortals
 Bow with rev'rence great as they pay to altars:
 Scepters should break in pieces and adore you;
 At whose sight the sun and moon should blush
 Themselves to blood and darkness, and falling
 From their sphere, crush the audacious world to atoms,
 For daring to behold a lustre so much greater
 Than their own.

Andromana.

Sir, give me leave to wonder
 What sin I have committed, which calling
 Down the vengeance of the gods,
 Hath made me author of all this blasphemy.
 Sir, I beseech your majesty, if you are angry
 With your creature, speak some cruel word and blast me.
 Scorn me not into the other world, where I have
 Sins enough of my own to blush for, and shall not need
 To dye his cheeks for other men's offences.

King.

Lady, though Parthian darts are not so sharp
 As are those killing words, yet that breath which
 Utters them, is sweeter than the morning dew.
 I'll be dumb, for praises cannot add, but rather
 Diminish Andromana's worth.

Andromana.

Andromana.

I wonder now no longer at this language,
 'Tis such as kings are bred in.
 But I beseech you, sir, if there be aught
 You will command your servant; if Andromana
 Must do or suffer any thing, for great Ephorbas,
 Lay by yourself a minute, and remember
 A merchant's wife must hear you.

King.

Your husband Leon's dead, I hear, lady—

[*She weeps.*]

Nay, spare those pearls, madam, cast not away
 Such treasure upon the memory of one,
 Who, if the best of men, deserves them not.
 Come, come, forget these sorrows, lady,
 And wear not mourning weeds before the world's
 Destruction; hide not those fair eyes, whose splendour
 Would enrich our court.
 Madam, though none there be in court
 Can merit such a beauty, yet I myself
 Have taken pains to search a husband for you;
 What think you of myself?

Andromana.

Great sir, your care is like yourself,
 All noble, but suits with me no better
 Than Phœbus' horses did with Phaeton,
 Ruin'd the world and him. First, sir,
 You do debase yourself to honour her,
 Whose worth is less considerable than lovers' oaths:
 My husband's ashes are scarce cold yet,
 And would your majesty have me forsake
 My honour, and his memory, so soon?
 I have not paid oblations due to his ashes yet.

King.

You compliment away the worth we know
 You have, Andromana: what say you to the prince?

Andromana.

I say he is the prince, and great Ephorbas' son;
 He's Plangus: and if you think there yet remains

A title that can be either better or greater,
I think him worthy of it.

King.

But dost think him worthy, Andromana?

Andromana.

O heavens! Is Jove worth heav'n?
Or doth the sun deserve to be a light
To all the world? Can virtue deserve honour?
Or labour, riches? Can Gods merit altars?
It might have been a puzzling question
To them whose ears have not been blest'd
With Plangus' worth. But this, 'tis so below him—

King.

But say he loves thee.

Andromana.

I dare not say so:

For when I think a prince pretends to such poor things
As I am, I feel an ice runs through my veins,
And my blood curdles into flakes of snow,
And bids me fear him; not with an awe, or reverence,
But as a spotted sinful thing, which is the worse
For being great. 'Tis such a fear, as I
Should conceive against an armed ravisher.

King.

These things may be expected, lady, I confess,
From blood that boils in flames hot as the sun
In scorching Libra, or sturdy Hercules,
When he unmaiden'd fifty in one night;
But from a man whose years have tam'd those vices,
Whose love is dotage and not lust,
Who doth adore a handsome virtue, and pays
His vows to't, you should have other hopes.
Plangus is young, a soldier, and by consequence
Something which youth excuses. But Ephorbas
Hath left those toys behind him, when he shook off
His youth.

Andromana.

Sir, now my fears are out.
O virtue! are there just Powers which men adore,
And throw away their prayers upon, that lend

Their

Their eyes to human actions ? or was the name
 Of heaven invented to still petty finners ?
 Sir, sure I am mistaken,
 You are not great Ephorbas, fir, whose virtue
 Is a theme of wonder to all neighbour nations ;
 Pray help me to him, I would see that angel ;
 The kingdom's honour, and good men's sanctuary:
 But if you are the man, whom I have pray'd for
 Oftner than I have slept ; pray, fir, belie not
 A virtue which I have hitherto admired.

King.

I see you are a stranger, lady, give me leave to say so
 To Ephorbas ; but if a lady of thy melting years
 Can love this grayness, I vow, my scepter,
 Throne, kingdom, and myself are thine ;
 Thou'rt fit to be a queen. *[She starts back.]*

Andromana.

A queen ! fir, have your subjects anger'd you ?
 Have they rebell'd, or done some sin that wants a name ?
 I'll cleave to'th' pavement till I have begg'd a vengeance
 Great as their crime ; but this you mention
 Is a punishment, which your subjects must
 Study years to curse you for ; no sin deserves it.
 You would blind my eyes with throwing gold before 'em,
 Or set me up so high on the steep pinnacle
 Of honour's temple, that you would have me
 Not be able to look down on my own simplicity.
 You can create me great, I know, fir, but good you cannot ;
 You might compel, entice me too perhaps to sin :
 But can you allay a gnawing conscience,
 Or bind up bleeding reputation ?
 I did never hear that physick could afford
 A remedy for a wounded honour.

Ephorbas.

Th'art a fool, Andromana.
 You must be mine, consider on't.

Andromana.

Sir, you may command your vassal.

King.

That's kindly said.

Andromana.

But—I humbly take my leave;
Goodness protect you!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE VI.

Enter Rinatus, Eubulus, and Aramnes.

Ephorbas.

WAIT on that lady forth.

Rinatus.

Would there were not a woman in the world,
So we had our prince again! Sir, are you mad?
Or have forgot you are a father? You have undone us all.

Ephorbas.

Why, what's the matter?

Rinatus.

O fir, the prince——

Ephorbas.

He is not dead, Rinatus, is he?

Rinatus.

Sir, if he be, 'tis you have murder'd him:
Was it for this you were so jealous t'other day?
May my Inophilus never pretend to virtue,
I'll teach him a more thriving art.
Come to the window a little, fir, and hear
How the good people curse you; as cold weather
As it is, some are so hard at it they sweat again.

Ephorbas.

Pr'ythee unriddle; hast thou drank hemlock
Since I saw thee last?

Rinatus.

I would not be in my wits for any thing
I'th' world, my grief would kill me, if I were:
He's mad that will speak sense or reason,
Now you have thrown away our prince thus:

Whose innocence was clearer than his own eyes :
Can you think how you have murdered so much virtue,
And not blush yourself to death ?

Ephorbas.

I think indeed I sent him general
Against the Argives ; but, 'twas his own desire.

Rinatus.

'Twas not his own desire, fir, to have
But thirteen thousand men, fir, was it ?
Was that army fit to oppose great Argo ?
There came a messenger just now, that saw the prince
Not sixteen miles from hence (for thither is the foe march'd)
Draw up his men to engage the enemy.

Ephorbas.

For Heav'n's sake, Rinatus, post him back again,
Bid him retreat ; command my son from me,
Not to go on till greater forces follow him.
If it be possible redeem the error ;
I'd give my kingdom, life, or any thing,
It were to do again.

Rinatus.

I'm glad to see this now ; Heav'n send
It ben't too late !

Ephorbas.

Nay, stand not prating.

[*A horn within.*

Rinatus.

'Tis from the army, fir. O Heaven, I fear !

Ephorbas.

If from the army, pr'ythee put on better looks.

Enter Messenger.

Messenger.

Your son, nay more, your dying son,
Commanded me to bring you word,
He dy'd true to his honour, king, and countrymen ;
Nor let me stay to see the brightest lamp go out,
That ever grac'd this orb.

[*The king faints.*

Rinatus.

O heaven, the king ! why this is worse, fir,
Than the other ; let us not lose you both.

Ephorbas.

Ephorbas.

Let me but hear how 'twas he made his exit,
And then my glass is run, I will not live
One minute longer.

Messenger.

Sir, thus it was——

'Tis scarce three hours ago since the brave
Plangus march'd from Lixa with an army,
Whose souls were richer than their cloaths by far,
Though their valour had put on all the bravery
That soldiers ever wore. The prince, whose presence
Breath'd new fire into these flaming spirits,
Resolv'd to meet the enemy with his handful,
And with a winged speed fell down to th' Elean streights,
Determining there to try it with him.
His soldiers also, true sons of war, contemning
So great odds, when victory and their country
Was to crown the conquerors, whetted
Their eager valours with impatient expectation
Of the enemy; who trusting to his multitude came on
Wing'd both with scorn and anger, to see that paucity
Should dare dispute victory against their odds.
Plangus, who though he saw, yet could not fear
Destruction, and scorn'd to avoid it,
When the king commanded him to meet it,
Marshal'd his army to the best advantage,
And having given Zopiro the left wing,
The body to Evarnes, himself chose out the right,
Because he would be opposite to Argo.
And keeping a reserve, as great as could be hop'd for
From so small a company, not above five hundred men,
He gave the command of them to Zenon,
Who with his fellows took it ill they should be so long idle,
And had not the honour to be thought worthy
To die with the most forward, and would, no question, have
Refus'd the charge; but that the smiling prince
Promis'd them they should have time to die.
Words here were needless, nor had he time to use them.

Rinatus.

What, was Inophilus idle all this while?

D 2

Messenger.

Messenger.

I only heard the prince wish, just as
He spurr'd his horse against the valiant Argo,
He had fewer by a thousand men :
So he had Inophilus.

Rinatus.

O traiterous boy !

Messenger.

The prince and Argo met ;
And like two mighty tides encounter'd. Here death
Put on her sable livery, and the two gallants,
Whose valour animated each army, bandyed a long time
With equal force, till at last great Argo fell ;
And on a sudden, multitudes of men
Accompany'd him, so that the wing
Went presently to rout and execution.
Zopiro also, and Evarnes, having slain
Their opposite leaders, breathe death and destruction
To their reeling foes.
Thus flush'd with victory and blood, the Iberians
Revell'd through the flying field, till there came on
The enemy's reserve of twenty thousand men,
Who fresh and lusty, grinded their teeth for anger
At their fellows' overthrow, and pouring on
Our weary soldiers, turn'd the stream of victory.
But the prince's valour, and good fortune, soon
Overcame this opposition, and having rallied
His broken troops, went to relieve his friends
Who had far'd worse, when presently he saw
Evarnes, who had pil'd up enemies about him,
As an obelisk of his own death and victory,
Fall bleeding at his foot, and having kiss'd it
With his dying lips, intreated him to save
Himself for a more happy day, and died.
'Twas not long after the gallant Zenon
(Who had performed that day deeds of eternal fame,
And with his few, spight of opposition, thrice charg'd
And routed some thousands of the enemy)
Expir'd ; which when the prince beheld,

Weeping

Weeping for anger, he flew amongst his enemies,
 Sustain'd only by the greatness of his courage,
 For blood and strength had both forsook him;
 He spent that spark of life was left in him,
 In slaughter and revenge, when leaning on
 His weapon's point, that dropp'd with blood as fast
 As he, he then conjur'd me with all speed
 Only to tell the king I saw him die
 Worthy of his father and himself.

[*A horn without. A shout.*

Ephorbas.

O heaven! what mean these acclamations?

[*A shout again.*

What, do the Iberians welcome their bloody
 Conquerors with so much joy?

SCENE VII.

Enter Plangus, Inophilus, and Zopiro, captains.

Ephorbas.

[*He faints.*

O H! oh!

Rinatus.

O cowardly boy! (for that base word includes
 All baseness) doth not shame kill thee,
 Or fear chill thy dastard blood to an ice,
 At sight of that most noble injur'd ghost?
 'Tis well, dear Plangus (if thy divinity deserve not
 A more lasting name) that thou art come
 To take revenge on that most traitorous son,
 In's father's presence, who detests his baseness
 More than thyself can do——

Plangus.

Excuse us, dear Rinatus,
 That wonder froze to such a silence,
 If when we expected such a welcome
 As had that Roman son, whose mother

Dy'd for joy to see him, we found so cold
An entertainment, something made us look'd upon
So like an inconvenience, that we could not
But put on some small amazement.

Ephorbas.

And do I hear thee speak again,
And see thee, or only dream a happiness,
Whose reality stars and my genius deny me?
Or art thou Plangus' angel, come to rouse
Me from despair?

Plangus.

Sir, pray believe it; and be not
Backward in th' entertainment of these soldiers,
If you esteem it a happiness;
In a word, you are a conqueror:
And the audacious Argives have paid their
Lives, as sacrifices to your offended sword.

Ephorbas.

A messenger of comfort to a despairing lover,
Is a less acceptable thing, than this thy presence;
If what yon fellow told me were untruth,
Thy welcome fight hath amply made amends
For those tormenting fears he put me to.
But if it were not, let me know what chance
Redeem'd you.

Plangus.

If you have heard how things then went
When I sent away that messenger—

Ephorbas.

Yes, I have heard it.

Plangus.

Then know, when death and our own fates
Had sworn our ruin, and we like some strong wall that
Long resists the iron vomits of the flaming cannon,
At last shakes itself into a dreadful ruin
To those who throw it down; so had the Iberians,
With valour great as the cause they fought for,
Strove with a noble envy, who should at first
Out-go his fellow in slaughtering the Argives:
At last oppress'd with multitude and toil,

We sunk under the unequal burden;
 Then was our emulation chang'd, and who before
 Strove to outdo each other, now eagerly contended
 To run the race of death first.
 Sir, there it was I (and many other braver captains)
 Fell, being one wound from head to foot.
 O then it was Inophilus came in,
 With about twenty other gallants, and with what speed
 The nimble light'ning flies from east to west,
 Redeem'd this bleeding trunk, which
 The insulting Argive had encompass'd,
 Blown up with victory and pride;
 He with a gallantry like none but great Inophilus,
 Being bravely back'd by his own soldiers,
 Whose actions spoke them more than men,
 Had not Inophilus been by, redeem'd the honour
 Of a bleeding day. And thus were our troops,
 As little now as their valour great,
 Enrich'd with victory, blood, and jewels,
 Of which the opposite army wanted no store,
 Return'd with the renown of an atchievement,
 As full of glory and honour to the conquerors,
 As ruin to the Argives.

Inophilus.

My liege,
 Had this action and my merit been so great
 As our prince would make it, I then might
 Own it, and expect reward.—
 But it was so small, so much below my duty,
 That I must, upon my knees, beg pardon
 That I came no sooner.

Epborbas.

This is a prodigy
 Beyond whatever yet was wrote in story.
 Inophilus, we have been too backward
 In cherishing thy growing virtue, we will
 Hereafter mend it.
 And, dear Rinatus, be proud of thy brave son,
 And let the people honour the remaining army;
 We shall esteem it as a favour done to us;

We have a largess for your valorous captains,
 You have not fought in vain.
 This day, let our court put on its greatest jollity,
 And let none wear a discontented brow;
 For where a frown is writ, we'll think it reason
 To say, that face hath characters of treason.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Plangus, and Inophilus.

Inophilus.

BUT, Sir, when you consider she's a woman—
Plangus.

O dear Inophilus!

Let earth and heav'n forget there are such things;
 Or if they ever name them, let it be with a curse
 Heavy as are the ills they act. A mandrake's note
 Would ring a better peal of music in my ears,
 Than those two syllables pronounc'd again.

Inophilus.

Pray, fir, put off this humour,
 This peevish pet, and reason tamely. Sir, you
 Have lost a wench, and will you therefore lose
 Yourself too? Hear me but patiently a word or two.

Plangus.

Pr'ythee go teach the galley-slaves that word,
 Things that dare own no thought beyond their chains,
 And stand in fear of whipping, and wanting bread.
 Bid them be tame and patient that fry in sulphur:
 'Tis a word I have forsworn to know the meaning of;
 Or if I must, 'tis but to shun it, and hate it more.
 Oh! were thy wrongs as great as mine, Inophilus,
 Or didst thou love but half so well as Plangus,

Thou

THE MERCHANT'S WIFE.

41

Thou would'st infill into me the poison of revenge,
And puff me up with thought of vengeance,
Till I did burst, and, like a breaking cloud,
Spread a contagion on those have injur'd me.

Inophilus.

Why, this were handsome in some country-fellow,
Whose soul is dirty as the thing he's mad for :
'Twere pretty in a lady that had lost her dog ;
But—

Plangus.

I know what thou would'st say,
But for Plangus : Oh ! 'tis for none but him to be so.
Those that have injur'd me are persons
I once held dearer than my eyes ; but how much
Greater was my love, so much more is the offence ;
Wounds from our friends are deepest.
Had any but my father—And yet methinks
That name should have protected me ;
Or was it made only to secure offenders ?
My life was his, he gave it me : my honour too
I could have parted with ; but 'las, my love
Was none of mine, no more than vows made to a Deity,
And not perform'd—And for that creature,
Who must be lost for ills through which
I must make way to my revenge,
Had she betray'd my honour to any thing
But him that gave me being,
She had made me half amends, in that my way
To vengeance had been open. Now I am spurr'd
Forward to revenge by fury, and yet
Held in by the rein of a foolish piety,
That doth no man good but them that use it not.
'Tis like the miser's idol, it yielded him
No gold till he had broke the head off.
Nay, Inophilus, one secret more,
And the horror of it blow thee from earth to heaven,
Where there are no such things as women :
'Twill turn thy soul the inside outward.
I cannot get it out. Pr'ythee what is't, Inophilus ?

Inophilus.

Inophilus.

Alas ! I know not, fir.

Plangus.

Do but imagine the worst of ill
Earth ever groan'd under ; a sin nothing but woman,
Nay, such a woman as Andromana durst think on ;
And it is that.

Inophilus.

How revenge transports you !
Princes have lost their mistresses before,
Nay, and to those have not such right to them
As hath Ephorbas to what Plangus hath.
Who could command her, if not Ephorbas ?

Plangus.

But I have—Oh Inophilus !—I burst—
Yet it will out—dost thou not see it here ?

[Unbuttons his doublet.]

Oh ! I have known Andromana as
Ephorbas did last night.—

Inophilus.

Why, fir,
The sin done by your father is not yours,
If you could not help it.—

Plangus.

Why, there it is : 'Tis that which gnaws me here.
But I swore by all the gods, that she was
As innocent from my unclean embraces, as is
The new-fall'n snow, or ermines that will meet
Ten deaths before one spot : I made my father think
The thoughts of angels were less innocent than she.
No, it was I betray'd him ; his virtue was too great
Not to have suspected it. How do I look, Inophilus ?

Inophilus.

Like some blest man that griev'd for other's sins,
And could, out of a good nature, part with half
His own whiteness, to purge the other's stains.

Plangus.

Now thou sooth'ft, and like some flattering glass,
Present'ft me to advantage. I am, in short,

One

One born to make Iberia unhappy.
 Had I as black a face as is my soul,
 You'd find in respect of it Ægyptians were snow-white.
 Methinks I hear Heaven tell me I am slow,
 And it is time I had begun revenge.
 Ephorbas has done him wrong, who loved him
 More than heaven or his happiness, and would
 Have run out of the world to have left him free,
 Whatever he would lay claim to, but Andromana;
 Nay, she also had been his, so't could have been without
 a fin.

But she knew the fin she acted, and yet did it;
 And lives free from the stroke of thunder.
 Is there such a thing as heaven, or such a one
 As justice dwells there? and can I ask the question?
 O the tameness of a conscience loaded with sin!
 Which reasons and talks when it should do.
 But I will be reveng'd, and thus I begin,—Inophilus,
 [He draws.

Be sure, when I am dead, to meet my ghost,
 And do as that instructs thee. 'Twill tell all the parti-
 culars

Of my revenge, who must die first, who last, and
 What way too. I have my lesson perfect.

[He leans the pummel on the ground to fall on it:
 Inophilus kicks it by with his foot.

Inophilus.

Is this the revenge befits great Plangus?

Plangus.

Had this been done two days ago—
 Thou durst as well have met the lightning
 Naked, as have oppos'd my will thus.

Inophilus.

Hear me;

[He draws.

Ask me no questions, nor answer me,—or if you do,
 By Heav'n I'll never speak more.

It is revenge you'd have, and 'tis a great one,
 A very noble one, to kill yourself.

Be confident, your greatest foes with nothing more.

When

When after-ages come to hear your story,
 What will they say? Just as they did of Cato,
 He durst not look great Cæsar in the face :
 So Plangus was afraid, and died.

A very pretty story, and much to a man's credit !
 For shame, dear Plangus (let friendship use that title)
 Shew your great soul the world believes you're master of
 (And I dare swear you are) in this action.
 Nay, rally up yourself, and fight it stoutly.
 Shake from your mind revenge, and having laid
 That passion by, put on that virtue
 The world admires in you ; 'tis now the time to shew it.
 The sun broke from a cloud, doubles his light ;
 And fire, the more resisted, flames more bright.
 Andromana has injur'd you ; scorn her therefore,
 And shew she had done nothing ; I'd not do her the
 favour

To have one thought for her, or be troubled
 At what she did—As for your father, sir,
 Besides the tie of nature, he knows not
 He hath wrong'd you : or if he doth,
 'Tis love that caus'd him ; a word that once
 Made an excuse with Plangus for what offence soever.

Plangus.

Thou hast wrought upon me,
 And I am resolved to live a day or two more :
 But if I like it not—
 Well, I will go to try to sleep a little—perhaps that may—
 I'm strangely melancholy—pr'ythee lie down by me,
 Inophilus, I'm safe while in thy company.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

*Enter Plangus, as from sleep.**Plangus.*

LORD! how this spirit of revenge still haunts me;
 And tempts me with such promis'd opportunity,
 And magnifies my injuries!
 Sometimes it calls me coward, and tells me,
 Conscience, in princes who are injur'd like myself,
 Is but an excuse they find, for what is in truth
 Poorness of spirit, or something baser.
 It tells me, 'tis a sin to be good when all the world is
 bad.

It makes me look upon myself, whilst wearing
 This garb of virtue, like some old antiquary
 In cloaths that are out of fashion in Iberia.
 But I will not yield to it: I know it is a greater glory
 To a man's self (and he that courts opinion
 Is of a vulgar spirit) to disobey than satisfy
 An appetite which I know is sinful.
 Good Heaven guard me, how am I tempted

Enter Andromana.

To put on my former temper! but thus
 I fling it from me.

[Throws away his sword]

SCENE III.

Andromana.

WHY how now, prince?
 If you part with your darling so easily,
 There is small hopes but you have thrown
 All love behind you.

Plangus.

Plangus.

Heaven, how she's alter'd!
I that once swore Jove from the well-tun'd sphere
Ne'er heard such harmony as I did, when the spake;
Methinks I can now, in comparifon of her voice,
Count fcritch-owls' mufick, or the croaking toad.

Andromana.

Who is't you fpeak of, fir?

Plangus.

Tempt me not, madam, with another word;
For by Heaven, you know I am apt, being incens'd—
Wake not thofe wrongs that bellow louder in my foul
Than wretches in the brazen bull, or Jove
Who fpeaks in thunder; thofe wrongs my goodnefs
Had half laid afide; or if you do,
I have a foul dares what you dare tempt me to.

Andromana.

Sir, I muft fpeak,
Though Jove forbad me with a fafh of lightning.
You think perhaps, fir, I have forgot my Plangus?
But, fir, I have infinitely injur'd you,
And could not fatisfy my confcience,
(If I fhould fay my love too, I fhould not lie)
Till I had ask'd your pardon.

Plangus.

Madam, the fault's forgiven and forgotten,
Without you move me to remember't with
A worfe apology. Live and enjoy your fins,
And the angry gods: Nay, the fevereft plague
I wifh you, is, that you may die
Without one crofs (for afflictions commonly teach
Virtues to them that know them not while prosperous)
Secure, without one thought or fense of a repentance.

Andromana.

Methinks you have a fteely temper on, to that
Which the other day you wore, when you were
More foft than down of bees. But, fir,
If you but knew the reafon why I have done
The action, which you perhaps call treason

To

To our loves, you would forbear such language.

Plangus.

Reason ! no doubt the man that robs a church,
Or profanes altars, hath reason for what he doth ;
To satisfy your lust, you have that reason, madam.

Andromana.

That I have loved you once,
I call Heav'n, my own heart, and you to witness ;
Now by that love, by all those vows have pass'd
Betwixt us, hear me.

Plangus.

O Heaven ! is that a conjuration !
Things you have broke with as much ease
As politicians do maxims of religion.
But I will hear, to know you and to hate you more.
Speak on.

Andromana.

You know whilst Leon liv'd, whose due they were,
I out of love resign'd my love and honour unto you.

Plangus.

Lust, Madam.

Andromana.

I know not, sir :
Your eloquence gave it that title then.
How many dangers walk'd I fearless through
To satisfy your pleasures ? Your very will ;
Nay more, your word ; nay, if I thought by sympathy
A thought of yours, that I imagin'd you
Might blush to speak, I made it straight my own,
And wak'd and studied as much to put it into act,
As doth a gamester upon loss to compass money.
At last we were betray'd, sir, to your father's spies,
Who deny'd us afterwards those opportunities
We stole before, befriended by my husband's ignorance.
Now was I brought to that which is the worst of ills,
A seeing, but not enjoying of that which I held dearest.
To see you daily, and to live without you,
Was a death many degrees beyond my own.
I knew the love was great, so great I durst not own it.

Nay

Nay more, I knew it was noble too, so noble
I knew my husband being dead, you would not stick
To ask your father's leave for public marriage.

Plangus.

Heaven and the Gods can witness I intended it.

Andromana.

Nay, farther yet, I knew your father's love,
Which would not have deny'd you any thing,
Would also have granted that.

Plangus.

Madam, you riddle strangely.

Andromana.

When I had forecast these easy possibilities,
I yet foresaw one thing that cross'd our designs,
That was a sense of honour I had in me.
Methought in honour I could not condescend
You should debase yourself so low.

It pleas'd me better to be your mistress, than your queen;
And stoln embraces, without the scandal
Of a public eye, were sweeter than those
Which might bring upon me (for rising greatness
Is still envy'd) the rancour of the people, and
Consequently distastes against their prince.
Sir, now we may act safely what might have been
Less secure. Your father's name gives a protection;
Or if that startle you, we'll call him husband.

Plangus.

Are you in earnest?

Andromana.

As serious as love can be.

Plangus.

Then I want words to tell you how I hate you:
I would sooner meet Megara 'tween a pair of sheets.
And can you think I should have so small piety,
As to be false unto my father's bed?
That I lov'd you once, I confess with shame;
And that I should have done so still, had you
Preserv'd those flames I think of now with horror.
But for those sins, and whatsoever else

I must

I must repent, I shall no doubt have great occasion,
When I shall see the kingdom envelop'd
In those swarms of plagues your sins call down,
And feel a share of them myself.

For Heaven's sake, madam! for my father's sake,
Nay, for my own too, if that have any interest,
Learn now at last a virtue, that may make us
As happy as much as hitherto unfortunate,
And render your story to posterity so burnish'd
With your shining goodness, that their eyes may not
Perceive the error of your former years.
Perhaps I then shall have a reverence for you,
As great as any son hath for a father's wife.
You wonder, lady, to see me talk thus different
From what you saw me half an hour ago.
I look'd upon myself as one that had lost
A blessing — But Heaven hath been happier to me;
For I am now so far from thinking you one,
That I look upon you as a plague,
No sin of good Ephorbas could deserve.
But love to you —

Andromana.

Sir!

Plangus.

Answer me not in words, but deeds;
I know you always talk'd unhappily,
And if your heart dare do what's ill,
I know it can well teach your tongue excuses.

[Exit Plangus.]

SCENE IV.

Andromana.

AND is my love then scorn'd?
The chaos of eternal night possess my breast,
That it may not see to startle at any

¹ *Unhappily*) *Mischivously*, or *wickedly*. — So in *All's well that ends well*, A. 4. S. 5.

² "A shrewd knave and an *unhappy*."

See also Mr. Stevens's note on *Henry VIIIth*, A. 1. S. 4.

VOL. XI.

E

Under-

Undertakings, though they would make
 Medusa's snakes curl into rings for fear.
 If greatness have inspired me with thoughts
 Of a more brave revenge, they shall be acted.
 A husband's murder was such a puny sin,
 I blush to speak it; but it was great enough
 For a merchant's wife: a queen must be more
 Daring in her revenge, nor must her wrath
 Be pacify'd under a whole kingdom's rain.

SCENE V.

Enter Libacer.

Andromana.

MY better genius, thou art welcome as
 A draught of water to a thirsty man:
 I ne'er had need of thee till now.
 Muster those devils dwell within thy breast,
 And let them counsel me to a revenge as great,
 As is my will to act it.

Libacer.

Madam, leave words.
 The rest you take in breathing makes your anger cool.
 Out with it, and if I do it not; if I startle
 At any ill to do you service, though it be
 To kill my mother, let me be troubled with
 The plague of a tender conscience, and lie sick
 Of repentance a half year after.

Andromana.

What need I tell thee more? Plangus must die;
 And after him Ephorbas, because he is his father.

Libacer.

Madam, he shall. But give me leave to ask you,
 How he, for whom alone of all the world
 You had a passion, is now become
 An object of your hatred, so great, as others

Must

THE MERCHANT'S WIFE.

21

Must die because they have relation to him ?

Andromana.

The air is hot yet with those words
I profer'd him in satisfaction;
And he refus'd it: What need I speak ?
Is't safe that he should live knows so much by us ?

Libacer.

He had been happy, had he never known
What virtue meant. I wonder that paltry thing
Is not banish'd earth; it ne'er did any good yet.
Beggary's a blessing to't; who e'er grew rich by virtue ?
Madam, we are not troubled with it.—
But to our business; I have thought a way.
You know his father loves him. 'Tis he shall ruin him;
And let's alone for him.

Andromana.

Pish ! pish ! that cannot be.

Libacer.

These women are always with their cannots.
What cannot be ? Have you but read the Sophy ?²
You will find that Haly (O how I hug that fellow's name !)
Ruin'd great Mirza by his father, and his father by his son,
That great politician, while all the court
Flam'd round about him, sat secure, and laugh'd,
Like those throw fireworks among the waving people;
That have nothing but fire and smoke about them,
And yet not singe one hair. Indeed he fell at last,
'Tis true, but he was shallow in that part o' th' plot:
What have we his example, but to learn by it ?
Praise Plangus to Ephorbas then so far,
That first he may fear for his kingdom,
And if you do proceed till he grew jealous
Of his bed, 'twill do the better.
The king is coming, I must be gone.

[*Exit Libacer.*]

² — *Have you but read the Sophy ?*] A Tragedy by Sir John Denham,
acted at Black Fryars, and printed in folio 1642.

SCENE VI.

*Enter Ephorbas.**Ephorbas.*

HOW fares Andromana?
 I'm glad this greatness fits so well about thee;
 My court was blest that hour I knew thee first.
 We'll live and still grow happy; we shall flourish
 Like some spreading tree, that shall ne'er cease
 Till its proud height o'erlook the skies.
 I hope I bade fair for a boy to-night.
 How happy should I count myself, could I
 But leave my kingdom something that had
 Thy image in't!

Andromana.

Sir, never think
 Iberia can be happy in another son,
 When such a prince as Plangus lives the heir;
 Who is the subject of all men's prayers, nay,
 The deserfer too. There's not a man or woman
 In the kingdom hath one good wish within their breast,
 But they straight bestow it upon Plangus; a prince,
 Whom mothers shew their little children, as something
 They should learn betime to worship and admire.

Ephorbas.

I know, Andromana, but —

Andromana.

Sir, virtue's perfection
 Is at the height in him. Whatever after-ages bear,
 Or give the name of worth to, must, if compar'd to him,
 Be but as foils to set his glory off the brighter.
 Nor are the men only thus taken with him;
 There's not a lady in the land but sighs
 With passion for him, and dreams on him a-nights.
 Husbands grow jealous of him, yet with joy
 That they are Plangus' rivals.

Ephorbas.

All this is nothing. Men talk'd as loud of
 Me when I was young.

Andromana.

Andromana.

Yea, but they say, fir,
You were not half so mincing in your carriage,
Nor so majestic. Besides —

Ephorbas.

I hope they do not make comparisons. [Starts.

Andromana.

Sir, I thought we could not have discours'd on a more
Welcome theme than what is full of Plangus.

Ephorbas.

No more you cannot.
Let him as a less star enjoy his splendor,
But it must not be so great to darken me.
But pr'ythee do they compare us then?

Andromana.

You're discompos'd, fir, I have done.

Ephorbas.

Nay, nothing but the remembrance of a foolish dream.
What say they?

Andromana.

Why, fir, some went so far
To say, they wond'red a lady of my years
Could marry the father, though a king,
When I might have had Plangus himself.

Ephorbas.

They did not —

Andromana.

Then I confess I blush'd, and had been out
Of temper, but that I thought it might be
The court fashion to talk boldly.

Ephorbas.

This story jump'd just with my dream to-night; ³
Methought I saw him threat'ning to kill me,
'Cause thou hadst married me —
But the young saucy boy shall know, I hold.

³ See Note to Alexander and Campaspe, A. 1. S. 3. vol. 2.

My scepter strong enough to crush him into atoms.
Did they not name Inophilus?

Andromana.

I think they did.
He had some share of praises too, but it was so,
As gleanings to a loading cart,
They sometimes fell beside.

Ephorbas.

Then I am satisfied. 'Tis an aspiring youth;
'Tis something that unites Plangus and him so.
I must be speedy in resolves. [Exit Ephorbas.]

SCENE VII.

Andromana.

WHO waits without there?

Enter Libacer.

Oh! art thou come? Stay, let me breathe, or else —

Libacer.

Nay, spare your pains, I know it all,
I saw him drink it with as great greediness,
As usurers do unthriftings lands, or jealous husbands
Confirm their cuckoldships by ocular testimony.

Andromana.

It took most rarely,
Beyond our hopes. I'll leave the rest to thee,
Thou art so fortunate in all designs.
Go on and prosper.

Libacer.

And I'll attend for an opportunity to meet
With Plangus, and betray him to ruin
As great as unavoidable.

[Exit.]

ACT

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter Ephorbas, salus.

Ephorbas.

FOR aught I know, my bed may be the next ;
 Men are not bad by halves, nor doth
 One mischief stop a man in his career of sin.
 There's as much reason i'th' one, as the other.
 Doth he affect my kingdom, 'cause I'm old ?
 No, that's not it ; he knows I must die shortly.
 'Tis not a desire of rule, and glory of their bending knees,
 Makes him forget his duty——
 He may as well covet Andromana, 'cause she's handsome,
 He satisfies a lust alike in both—Well, let him be
 My rival in the kingdom ; 'tis but what
 He was born to, and I must leave it him ;
 But for my wife, he must excuse me,
 Nay he shall—— *[He pausesb.]*
 Yet now I think on't better, the grounds are slender,
 And my suspicions slight ; no evidence against him
 But the people's love, and that's no fault of his,
 Unless deserving be a crime.—Who's without there ?

Enter Libacer.

Go call in Plangus, and bid him not stay,
 For I must speak with him.

[Exit King.]

SCENE II.

Libacer.

NAY, then all's dash'd if once he comes to parly.
 I must not have them talk. But here he is.

SCENE III.

*Enter Plangus.**Libacer.*

ALL health and happiness attend the prince.
Plangus.

Pray tell me if you saw the king?
 Be short, for I am very melancholy.

Libacer.

He parted hence just now, but
 With such a fury revelling in his looks,
 There had been less danger in a basilisk.

Plangus.

Went he this way?

Libacer.

Yes, sir.

[*He is going out, but turns short.*

Plangus.

But dost not thou know what mov'd him?

Libacer.

I heard some such words as these:

My rival in the kingdom — — There's evidence against
 him — —

The people's love — — Deserving is a crime — —
 And somewhat else my fear-made me forget.

Plangus.

Who was there with him lately?

Libacer.

I cannot tell: but about a quarter of an hour ago
 He ask'd for you; and every time he nam'd you,
 He seem'd angry.

Plangus.

Named me! Thou art mistaken.

Libacer.

I had almost forgot, sir,
 I have a message to you from Andromana.

Plangus.

I will not hear one syllable.

Libacer.

No; so she told me; but charg'd me to speak it,

Or

Or die ; for it concern'd your life, which she held dearer
Than her own.

Plangus.

I value it not ; but speak the mystery.

Libacer.

When first her lips began to move, a blush
O'erflow'd her face, as if her heart had sent
Her tainted blood to seek a passage out.
Then, with a show'r of tears, she told me how
Inordinate desires had made her but this morning
Tempt you to th' acting of a sin she would not name ;
And that your virtue had so wrought upon her,
She had not left one thought unchang'd.
She loves you still, but with affection
That carries honour, and converted thoughts.
And next, she bade me whisper in your ear,
(For time was short) that if you loved her
Or yourself, or intended to cherish
The people's growing hopes, you should not come
When the king sent for you.
For something had incens'd him so highly
Against you, that there was mighty danger in it.
She bade me haste, for time would not permit her
To say more. I was scarce out o'th' chamber,
When your father came and ask'd for you,
And bade me seek you out with speed.
Sir, I should be most proud to serve you.

Plangus.

I thank thee, friend ; but pr'ythee tell thy mistress,
Innocence knows no fear : 'tis for guilty souls
To doubt their safety. If she would have me safe,
My only way is by present appearance
To clear myself ; for I believe, my false accusers
Wish nothing more, than that I should be absent.

Libacer.

The devil's in him sure, he guesseth so right.

[*Aside.*

She told me so, Sir, and would have wish'd you to it ;
But that there was a way to serve you better by.
She saith Ephorbas told her, a few minutes hence

He'd

He'd call a council, where they'd consult about you.
The place is hang'd so, that behind the wall, Sir,
You may stand secure, and hear what passeth;
And according to what they determine, you may
Provide for your safety; only for more security
She wisheth you would arm yourself——
Sir, pray resolve, she'll pacify the king,
That you appear not presently.

Plangus.

Well, I will be persuaded:
Tell her, I'm resolv'd, I will not come.

Libacer.

Happiness attend you! Half an hour hence
I'll wait upon you.

[*Exit Lib.*]

Plangus.

We shall reward thee.

SCENE IV.

Plangus.

WHENCE should this kindness come? and on a
sudden too?
A strange alteration!—She who a day ago
Forgot the vows her soul was fetter'd in,
And but this morning tempted me to a sin
I can scarce think on without fear, should on
An instant be careful for my safety,
And that from a principle of virtue too.

SCENE

SCENE V.

Enter Inophilus.

Inophilus.

WHO was that with you, Sir, just now?

Plangus.

An honest fellow certainly; but one I know not.

Inophilus.

An honest fellow call you him?

If he have not rogue writ in great letters in's face,
I have no physnomy. Pray, Sir, what was
His business to you?

Plangus.

A message from Andromana;
Who, out of love, desires me not to go to
My father, because something hath put him
In a fume against me.

Inophilus.

Did the king fend for you?

Plangus.

He did so.

Inophilus.

But upon her intreaty, you forbore to go?

Plangus.

What then?

Inophilus.

Then you are mad, sir,
And tacitly conspire to your own ruin.
Do, take an enemy's advice, and die the object
Both of their joy and scorn.
Where are your senses, Sir? Or pray, whence springs
This friendship of Andromana's? Alas! you should not
Measure her malice by the smallness of your own.
She has injur'd you, she knows it, Sir;
And though at present she enjoys her treachery,
She may soon fall beside it; Ephorbas is not
Immortal, nor can she promise to herself

Security.

ANDROMANA; OR,

Security; when you have power to call her ills in question,
Wer't nothing else, her safety would make her
To plot your death.. I hinder you in talking;
But pray begone, and when you see your father,
Speak boldly to him, or you are gone for ever.

Plangus.

I tell thee once again, Inophilus,
Since I have said I would not go, both heav'n and thee
Shall want a motive to make me stir one foot.
Were danger just before me, running
With open jaws upon me; and had my word been giv'n
To remain here, I would be forc'd from life
Before my place.

Inophilus,

Here is a bravery now would make a man
Forswear all gallantry, to fool away your life thus
In a humour——I met the court just now, fir,
As full of whippers, every man's eyes spoke strong
amazement.

My father's tent for, with two other Lords,
Eubulus and Anamedes; and the court-gates are lock'd.
Resolve, fir, and command me something, wherein
I may have an occasion to serve you.

Plangus.

Then I resolve to do as I am caution'd.
Walk in; I'll tell thee more.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

Enter Ephorbas and Libacer.

Ephorbas.

WHAT was his answer then?

Libacer.

Tell him, I am resolv'd I will not come.
Those were the very words, fir.

Ephorbas.

Ephorbas.

'Twas very pretty; resolute methinks.
If he be grown so stubborn already,
The next we must expect is action.

Libacer.

But yet he bids me, if you ask'd why he came not,
To find some excuse or other.

Ephorbas.

He could find none himself then.
Call in the Lords, we must be sudden in our execution:
But pr'ythee one thing more, who was there with him?

Libacer.

Nobody; but I met going to him young Inophilus;
And heard one servant tell another, in great haste,
Their Lord would speak with some o'th' captains of the
army. [Exit.

S C E N E VII.

Enter Rinatus, Eubulus, and Anamedes.

Ephorbas.

SIT down, my Lords; we have business with you,
Requires your hands and hearts, both speed and
counsel;

Our danger's such, that I could wish't had flown
Upon us without warning, for so cross the fates are,
Our safety must be bought at such a price,
That we must lose what is as dear to us
Almost as it. 'Tis Plangus' death or mine
Must secure the other's life—Nay, startle not;
If I am grown as wearisome to you
As to him, your calling is in vain, my Lords;
Nor shall I labour longer to preserve
A life deny'd me by the gods and you.
But if there's any here who hath a son
Brought to these years, with so much care and love

As

62 ANDROMANA; OR,

As mine hath been, think what a grief it is
To lose him, and shed one tear with me.
But for that son to plume himself with feathers
Pluck'd from his father's wings, would melt one's eyes
balls.

Yet Plangus, who hath vizarded his ends
With virtue, finding it uselefs now, hath thrown
It from him, and openly attempts my crown and life.
When mischief's wheel once runs, how fast it speeds,
Headlong to put in act the blackest deeds!
Were my crown his, had he my life to give,
Though he would let me, I would scorn to live.

Eubulus.

Sir, we are called upon a great affair,
And if it be true, the speed of our resolves
Shall be as great as it.
Your majesty hath reign'd so happily, and long,
We will not think a time beyond it.
And such, so great your virtue still hath been,
Strangers have been enamour'd, and admir'd it.
Our enemies, that could have wish'd it less,
Yet have fate down with envy, nor attempted
Aught against you, knowing (I'm confident)
By such unjust attempts the gods would be their foes.
Methinks 'tis therefore much less likely
That Plangus who hath hitherto been found
A miracle of filial piety,
And one that we may say was born the heir
To all your virtues, all your goodness,
As well as the kingdom; who counts it glory
As much to be an honest man, as a great prince:
I say, for him, who as he is your son,
And as we hitherto have found him full
Of worth and honour, we cannot but behold
As him in whom the spreading hopes of all
Iberia grow, and promise to themselves
A still green happiness, that ne'er shall know
What autumn, or a naked winter means.
For him, that hath scarce yet put off
Those cloaths which still wear the badges
Of the great danger he was in, not for

Himself,

Himself, my liege, but you and us; for had
 He wish'd the ruin of his father and his country,
 The Argives would have done that for him,
 And he not have been call'd in question.
 But when we must remember with what wings
 He flew to meet the torrent, both against
 The counsel of his friends, and his own hopes;
 How love to you and us spurr'd him on forward
 To those impossibilities, which nothing
 But love and valour durst have attempted.
 Why then, methinks, 'tis strange, yea very strange,
 Thus in a moment t'have flung all nature off,
 And all religion; and that, sir, against you,
 Whom we all well know and think, with fear,
 (But our fading hopes spring fresh from Plangus)
 Must shortly pay your tribute to the grave.
 Not that we doubt your majesty hath cause
 To apprehend a danger; only 'tis wish'd,
 Those who inform'd you were examin'd strictly,
 And Plangus sent for to answer for himself.
 Slanders, like mists, still vanish at the sight
 Of innocents, who bring their lies to light.

Ephorbas.

If an oration could have made him clear,
 No doubt, my fears are vain, and we shall lie
 Still sleeping in security, as great
 And lasting as Plangus and his 'complices
 Can wish upon us, nor wake till we are bound
 In the securest chains, death's fetters.
 That I am old is true, and Plangus knows it.
 He would have catch'd a cannon-bullet sooner else
 Between his naked hands, than have provok'd
 My fury: but age hath froze me
 To an icy numbness: yet shall he know
 My veins have fire as well as his, and when
 Incens'd, my eyes shoot as much poison too.
 What you alledge about his battle 'gainst the Argives
 As an excuse, it is a proof against him.
 Though thieves rob others, yet they fight themselves
 For those that rob, when strangers set on them,

And

And all unite against a common enemy.
 Had Plangus' private interests not held
 Him to us, no doubt he'd left us naked
 Of all defence; but an intestine fury,
 To see the Argives bear away the fruits
 Of all his labours, all his treasons,
 Shot him into despair, and made him play
 A game was almost lost, rather than give all o'er.
 Besides, that action hath endear'd him to the people;
 Gain'd him the soldiers hearts with so great ease,
 The danger's nothing in respect o'th' rise
 He takes from hence to climb up to his ends.
 And for the virtue that hath gull'd us all,
 I'd blush to speak it; that a son of mine
 Should ever be so base to seek a cloak
 For what he doth, but that I have disclaim'd
 All my relations to him, and would adopt
 A Cannibal sooner for a son than he.
 The evidence we have is what we wish were less,
 Then might I hug my Plangus, and he me;
 But since the fates and his own ills deny
 That intercourse, what can remain,
 But that we should proceed to sentence
 Speedy as themselves, and stop the ill, which may
 Strike when 'tis night, or while 'tis call'd to-day.
 He knows his guilt too well, and hath deny'd
 To come, that so he might be justify'd.
 Once disobey'd as father, the next thing
 Will be rebellion to me as his king.

 S C E N E VIII.

Enter Libacer.

Rinaldus.

AS sure as death, this is one
 Of the rogues that hath his roguery to act,
 And comes in like something that hath brought news

In

In the latter end of a play. Now shall we have
Some strange discovery—How the rogue stares!

Libacer.

No sooner had we shut the gates, my liege,
Than an uncertain rumour spread among the people
That Plangus was in danger.
When if you ever saw a hive of bees,
How if you stir but one the whole swarm moves,
And testify their anger; so strait whole crowds
Of people, the greatest half not knowing what
They came for, swarmed to the gates, and with
Confused cries, hindered themselves from being under
flood;

Till some having divers times cried Plangus;
Some their prince, all with one note,
Made up a common voice, and so continued;
Till some captains with one or two selected troops
Made up to them, and having promised them
They would secure the prince, desired them
To withdraw.
And when they came so nigh as to be heard;
They did in earnest what the other had
Attempted with so much noise and failed in;
For they told the porter, in plain soldiers language,
They would either see Plangus safe, or force
The gates upon him. He, in this exigence,
Hath sent to know your pleasure.

Ephorbas.

How say you now, my Lords?
Where is the innocence, the love to you and us?
For my part, I will meet the danger;
Tame expectation is beneath a king.
Only let me intreat you to see my queen safe.
'Tis pity she should smart who hath no sin
To answer for, but calling me her husband.
Plangus—Iberia shall be thine—But
With curses of the angry gods, and a kind
Injur'd dying father.

[*He goes to stab himself, Rinatus stays him.*

Rinatus.

Heav'n bless you, fir, what a despair is this?
 Because you hate a hangman, you will be
 Your executioner yourself. Believe me,
 That which presents so great danger to you
 I look upon with joy. There is no subject
 That loves you, or the prince, but must be glad
 To see the zeal Iberians bear to a true virtue,
 When bending under an unjust oppression;
 No doubt their love had been as great to you,
 Had you been in like danger—Besides, my Lord,
 You are not sure 'tis with the prince's consent,
 The soldiers do this. My life for yours
 You will be safe, let the worst come——
 Let us go meet your fears.

*[They begin to rise, when at the instant Andromana
 enters undress'd, and in a fright.]*

Andromana.

Happy am I, my Lord, *[She weeps.]*
 This sudden fright hath rescu'd me from being made
 The subject of some villain's lust, who
 With his sword drawn, just now was forcing me
 To lewd embraces; if you command to search the court,
 He cannot be far hence, for he ran that way.

Rinatus.

O impudence!
 That durst attempt a sin (darkness and woods
 Have too many eyes for) in the open court.
[Plangus stirs behind the hangings.]
 I shall be with you——The devil hath
 Armour on——*[Rinatus draws, and runs at him.]*

Ephorbas.

Drag him to torture——*[They fetch him out.]*
 My son! why have I liv'd to see this?
 Away with him to death; the air will grow infectious.
 Why stay you?

S C E N E

SCENE IX.

*Enter Zepiro and Inophilus, with Soldiers.**Inophilus.*

UNHAND the prince, or else by Heav'n he treads
 Into his grave that moves a foot to touch him.
 Madam, though Plangus' noble self was blind,
 And could not see the deep black darkness of your
 Hellish actions; his friends had eyes about them.
 Was this your love? this your repentance?
 This your advice, your counsel? I must confess, had I,
 And these his noble friends here, been rul'd by him,
 Ere this he'd been a sacrifice to your revenge and you.
 Why stand you mute, sir? Want you a tongue to justify
 Your innocence our swords and we maintain?
 And now, my liege, we turn to you,
 Whom we have serv'd as truly
 As ever subjects did any prince alive;
 And whilst you're worthy, we will do so still;
 But we'll be no man's slaves alive,
 Much less be his that is another's, while this base witch.
 (For so she is) constrains you to do actions
 Children would blush at, and wise men laugh at,
 Which will after leave you both to repentance
 And despair. This beggar, whom t'other day
 You took up as some lost thing,
 Gave your honour to, and in that our safety,
 That knew less to be good than devils do, and hath
 Ills lodg'd in her, that would make hell beyond that
 The furies dwell in: Banish her hence,
 Send her to some place, where murders, rapines,
 Or sins yet unheard of, do inhabit,
 And where she can do us no mischief.
 Do you betake yourself
 To your former virtue, and restore the prince
 To those affections you once had for him,

We then perhaps may live to see Iberia happy.

Ephorbas.

Why am I forc'd thus to declare his shame,
Which at the bound strikes me, and is made my own?
You know not how well Plangus can dissemble,
He is an hypocrite, I need not tell you more,
Those three syllables comprehend all ill.
My queen, just now, 'scap'd from his base attempt,
Wherein he would have forc'd her to have damn'd
Herself and him, and dishonour'd me.
What meant that armour on, and why so guarded?
Where was a danger threat'ned him?
Or doth he think his conscience could not
Sting him through it?
I wish he might live, my lords, but as nature,
That as he is my son, bids me preserve him;
So honour, which pleads to the king stronger
Than nature can, tells me, for that very reason,
I can less pardon him than something born
A stranger to my blood——But I deserve
To die, as well as he; if he be grown
A burden to the earth, I am so too,
That gave the monster being.
Wherefore, let me be drawn to execution too,
For fathers are guilty of their children's ills.

Inophilus.

Would Plangus then have forc'd Andromana?
Yes, so would Daphne have ravish'd Phœbus:
I'll undertake goats are less salt than she—
But for his armour—Can any man that breathes
One common air with her not need an armour?
Brass walls cannot be security enough.
Why speak you not, sir? are you dumb too?

Plangus.

It is for them to speak are sure to be believ'd,
And not for him that is condemn'd as guilty;
Words can excuse slight faults.
If mine are esteem'd such, that all my actions,
A speaking duty of one and twenty years,
Speak not enough to clear me, silence shall,

I have

I have no more to say, therefore,
But to bid you do your duty to the king,
And ask him pardon for the intemperate zeal:
Heav'n knows I wish't it not, nor would I buy
My safety at one of my father's angry thoughts,
Much less his fears, for those I fall by.
Obey my father, and if ye love me, gentlemen,
Shed not one tear for Plangus:
For I am timely taken from those plagues
This woman's crying fins must bring
Upon Iberia, and make you wish,
That you had dy'd as soon and innocent as I.

Andromana.

That I was nothing I confess; that what I am,
I owe to Ephorbas; nay, that the greatness
I am now in, tells me it is too high
To be secure, my fears bear witness.
I wish my life would excuse Plangus his,
At least my blood wash off the blackness of his guilt,
Heav'n knows it should not be one minute
Ere he should be restor'd to his former virtues;
But since it cannot be, I'll in and weep,
Not for my self, but him.

[Exit.

Inophilus.

Millions of plagues go with thee.
Sir, you shall along with us, we will not
Trust you, or to the king, or her.

[Exeunt.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Libacer solus.

Libacer.

What politician was there ever yet,
Who swimming through a sea of plots and treasons,
Sunk not at last i' th' very haven's mouth?

And shall I do so too? No, my thoughts prompt me,
 I shall be told in story, as the first
 That stood secure upon the dreadful ruins
 He had thrown down beneath him. Yet I am nigh
 The precipice I strive to shun with so much care.
 I have betray'd Plangus, 'tis true, and still
 Have found a growing fortune; but so long
 As jealousy binds up Ephorbas' thoughts
 From searching deeper, 'tis not well
 That Plangus lives at all: though he be disgrac'd,
 H'has friends enow about the king, and they will find
 A time to pacify him, which will be my undoing:
 He must not therefore live. Andromana
 Is of that mind too; but how to compass it—
 Or when perhaps I have, what will become of me?
 Nothing more usual than for those folks
 Who have by sinister means reach'd to the top
 O' th' mountain of their hopes, but they throw down
 And forget the power that rais'd them;
 Indeed necessity enforceth them, lest others climb
 By the same steps they did, and ruin them.
 I must not therefore trust her womanship,
 Who, though I know she cannot stand without me now,
 Yet when she's queen alone,
 Fortune may alter her, and make her look upon me
 As one whose life whispers unto her own guilt.
 It is not safe to be the object of a prince's fear;
 Then she will find others will be as apt
 To keep her up, as I to raise her;
 I will prevent her first.
 Time is not ripe yet, but when it is
 (For I must walk on with her a little farther)
 I will unravel all this labyrinth
 Ev'n to the king himself. Then let her accuse me,
 Though she should damn herself to hell,
 I know she'll be believ'd no more, than
 Plangus hath been hitherto.
 Thus shall I still grow great, though all the world
 Be to a dreadful ruin madly hurl'd.

[Exit.]

SCENE

S C E N E II.

*Plangus solus.**Plangus.*

I Can no longer hold, 'tis not i'th' power
 Of fate to make me less; bid me out-stare
 The sun, out-run a falling star,
 Feed upon flames, or pocket up the clouds;
 Or if there be a task mad Juno's hate
 Could not invent to plague poor Hercules,
 Impose it upon me, I'll do't without a grudge;
 Condemn me to a gally, load me with chains,
 Whose weight may so keep me down, I can scarce
 Swell under my burden to let out a sigh,
 I would o'ercome all. Were there a deity
 That men adore, and throw their prayers upon,
 That would lend just ears to human wishes,
 I would grow great by being punished, and be
 A plague myself, so that when people curst
 Beyond invention, to their prodigious rhetoric
 This epiphonema should be added,
 "Become as miserable as wretched Plangus."
 I have been jaded, basely jaded, by those tame fools
 Honour and piety, and now am wak'd into revenge,
 Breathing forth ruin to those first spread
 This drowfiness upon my foul.
 A woman! O heaven! had I been gull'd
 By any thing had borne the name of man!
 But this will look so fordidly in story,
 I shall be grown discourse for grooms and foot-boys,
 Be balladed, and sung to filthy tunes—
 But do I talk still? well, I must leave
 This patience—And now, Ephorbas,
 Since thou hast wrought me to this temper,
 I'll be reveng'd with as much skill as thou
 Hast injar'd me. I'll to these presently,

For my hour-glass shall not run ten minutes longer,
 And having kill'd myself before thee,
 I'll pluck my heart out, tell thee all
 My innocence, and leave thee hem'd in with
 A despair thicker than Ægyptian darkness.
 I know thou canst not choose but die for grief.
 But here he is.

[Exit,

S C E N E III.

*Ephorbas solus.**Ephorbas.*

Riddle upon riddle! I have dream'd this night
 Plangus was cloath'd like innocence, all white;
 And Andromana then methoughts was grown
 So black, nothing but all one guilt was shewn.
 What shall I do? Shall I believe a dream?
 Which is a vapour born along the stream
 Of fancy, and sprung up from the gross fumes
 Of a full stomach, sent to the upper rooms
 O'th' brain by our ill genius, to spoil our sight,
 And cloud our judgments like a misty night.
 Why do I doubt? 'tis ominous to stay
 Demurring, when the way is plain: Is day
 Or night best to judge colours? shall I stand,
 Trying the water's soundness, when the land
 Presents firm footing? Truth by day appears,
 And I from tapers hope to find my fears
 Oppos'd. And yet methinks 'tis very strange,
 A son of mine should suddenly thus change,
 And throw his nature off; I did not so
 When I was young. I am resolv'd to know
 The truth, and clear this mist from fore my eyes;
 If't can be done by care, by gold, or spies.

[Exit.

S C E N E

SCENE IV.

*Andromana sola.**Andromana.*

SO badgers dig the holes,
 And foxes live in them : Of all factors,
 State-factors are the worst, and yet least to themselves
 Of all their labour. This Libacer is wading
 To the throat in blood to do me service.
 Tame fool ! can he imagine I remove
 A husband and a son, to suffer him
 To live still and upbraid my ills ?

*Enter Libacer.**Libacer.*

It is resoly'd.
 But here she is, I must speak fairly for a while.

Andromana.

How doth it succeed now, my darling ?
 Shall we be great ? great alone ?

Libacer.

As great as pride and fullness of revenge
 Can swell us.—Hark in your ear, madam,
 I'll tell you all our plot, but softly,
 For perhaps the jealous walls may echo
 Back the treason.

[They whisper.]

SCENE V.

*Enter Plangus with his sword drawn.**Plangus.*

I Bore whilst I could, but now 'tis grown
 Too great to be contain'd in human breast,
 And it shall out, tho' hoop'd with walls of brass.

Are they at it? I stood once a list'ning at their intreaty,
This time at my own I'll stand and hearken.

[Steps aside.

Andromana.

It is impossible.

Libacer.

I tell you no. I'll aggravate the injuries,
And tell him how basely poor it was
For a father to betray his son so.

Andromana.

His piety shall never —

Libacer.

But his fury shall. I'll stab the king himself, and bring
Those witnesses shall swear 'twas Plangus.

Plangus.

Nay then, 'tis time to strike —
There, carry thy intents to hell.

[He stabs Libacer.

Andromana.

Help! murder! murder! a rape! a rape!

Enter Ephorbas.

Ephorbas.

What dismal note was that?

Andromana.

Sir, there you see your martyr,
Whose force being too weak to save my honour,
His fidelity was greater, and dy'd a loyal sacrifice,
Offer'd by the impious hand of that vile man.

Ephorbas.

O Heav'n! doth not the earth yet gape and swallow
thee?

Thy life shall be my crime no longer; I gave it thee,
And thus resume it with a thousand curses.

[He stabs Plangus.

Plangus.

Sir, I at length am happy
To the height of all my wishes.
I am a going suddenly—from all
My troubles, all your fears—
But I will tell my story first—

[Faints.

How you have wrong'd, and been wrong'd yourself.

This woman—to be short—
 Hath twin'd like ivy with my naked limbs
 Before she marry'd you—
 And would—Oh—in spite of death
 I will go on—have tempted me to bed her since.
 Upon refusal she turn'd her love to hate,
 And plots my ruin—And—
 Next your death—I can no more—
 I kill'd the instrument—farewel—

Forgive me—

[Dies.

Ephorbas.

Can this be true, Andromana?

Andromana.

Do you believe it?

Ephorbas.

I wish I had not cause—

Andromana.

Sir, every syllable was true he told you;
 Whose words I thus confirm.

*She takes Plangus's dagger, flings it at Ephorbas,
 and kills him.*

Ephorbas.

I'm slain! mercy, Heaven.

Andromana.

You should have come a little sooner.

Enter Inophilus.

Inophilus.

Do I see well? or is the prince here slain?

Andromana.

He is, and 'cause you love him,
 Carry that token of my love to him, [Stabs Inophilus,
 I know he'll take it kindly that you take
 So long a journey only to see him.

Inophilus.

It was the devil struck, sure,
 A woman could not do it—Plangus, oh!—

[Dies.

SCENE

SCENE VI.

Enter Rinatus, Eubulus, Anamedes.

Rinatus.

HHeaven defend us! what a sight is here?
The king, the prince, both slain? what, and my
son too?

Only this woman living?—Speak out,
Scritch-owl, witch, how came they by their deaths?

Andromana.

By me; how else?

Rinatus.

Let's torture her.

Andromana.

I can prevent you; I would not live a minute longer,
Unless to act my ills again, for all Iberia. [*Stabs herself.*
I have lived long enough to boast an act,
After which no mischief shall be new—

[*Dies.*

Rinatus.

Let's in, and weep our weary lives away;
When this is told, let after-ages say,
But Andromana none could have begun it,
And none but Andromana could have done it.

[*Exeunt.*

EDITION.

A N D R O M A N A ;

OR,

THE MERCHANT'S WIFE;

The Scene IBERIA,

By J. S.

L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN BELLINGER; and are to be sold at
his Shop, in *Clifford's Inn Lane*, in *Fleet-street*.

1660. 4to.



THE

M A Y O R

O F

QUINBOROUGH.



THIS play, although it was not published sooner than the year 1660, is supposed to be one of the earliest productions of the author Thomas Middleton. * Mr. Malone imagines it to have been written about the same time that *Pericles* and *Robert of Huntingdon* appeared, each of these plays having a chorus in the same manner as *Raynolds* in the present performance. The regulation of the metre seems to have been intirely neglected; some liberties have therefore been necessarily taken to restore the play nearer to the state in which it is presumed the author left it.

* Attempt to ascertain the order of Shakspeare's Plays. P. 283.

GENTLEMEN,

YOU have the first sight of him, I assure you. This Mayor of *Quinborough*, whom you have all heard of, and some of you beheld upon the stage, now begins to walk abroad in print; he has been known sufficiently by the reputation of his wit, which is enough, by the way, to distinguish him from ordinary Mayors; but wit, you know, has skulk'd in corners for many years past, and he was thought to have most of it that could best hide himself. Now whether this magistrate fear'd the decimating times, or kept up the state of other Mayors, that are bound not to go out of their liberties during the time of their mayoralty, I know not; 'tis enough for me to put him into your hands, under the title of an honest man, which will appear plainly to you, because you shall find him all along to have a great pique to the rebel Oliver. I am told his drollery yields to none the English drama did ever produce; and though I would not put his modesty to the blush, by speaking too much in his commendation, yet I know you will agree with me, upon your better acquaintance with him, that there is some difference in point of wit, betwixt the Mayor of *Quinborough* and the Mayor of *Huntingdon*².

² Huntingdon, the place where Oliver Cromwell was born and resided many years of his life. Some allusion here seems to be lost.

DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CONSTANTIUS.
 AURELIUS AMBROSIUS.
 UTHUR PENDRAGON.
 VORTIGER.
 HENGIST.
 HORSUS.
 DEVONSHIRE, } *British Lords.*
 STAFFORD, }
 GENTLEMEN.
 SIMON.
 OLIVER.
 TAYLOR.
 BARBER.
 AMINADAB.
 FOOTMEN.
 SOLDIERS.
 CHEATERS.
 CASTIZA.
 ROXENA.
 LADIES.
 RAYNULPH, *Monk of Chester.*
 GERMANUS, } *Monks.*
 LUPUS, }
 GRAZIERS.

T H E
M A Y O R
O F
Q U I N B O R O U G H.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

Enter Raynulpb ³:

Raynulpb.

WHAT Raynulpb, monk of Chester, can
Raife from his polychronicon,
That raifeth him, as works do men,
To fee long-parted light again,
That beft may please this round fair ring,
With sparkling diamonds circled in,
I fhall produce. If all my powers
Can win the grace of two poor hours,
Well apaid I go to reft.
Ancient ftories have been beft;

³ Raynulpb.] Raynulpb Higden was the compiler of the Polychronicon, as far as the year 1357, thirty-first of Edward III. It was translated into English by Trevisa, and completed and printed by Caxton in folio, 1482.

Fashions,

Fashions, that are now call'd new,
Have been worn by more than you ;
Elder times have us'd the same,
Though these new ones get the name :
So in story, what's now told
That takes not part with days of old ?
Then to approve time's mutual glory,
Join new time's love to old time's story.

[Exit.

Shouts within ; then enter Vortiger.

Vortiger.

Will that wide-throated beast, the multitude,
Never leave bellowing ? Courtiers are ill
Advised when they first make such monsters.
How near was I to a scepter and a crown ?
Fair power was even upon me, my desires
Were casting glory, till this forked rabble,
With their infectious acclamations,
Poison'd my fortunes for Constantine's sons,
Well, though I rise not king, I'll seek the means
To grow as near to one as policy can,
And choak their expectations.—Now, good lords,

Enter Devon and Stafford.

In whose kind loves and wishes I am built
As high as human dignity can aspire,
Are yet those trunks, that have no other souls
But noise and ignorance, something more quiet ?

Devon.

Nor are they like to be, for aught we gather,
Their wills are up still ; nothing can appease them,
Good speeches are but cast away upon them.

Vortiger.

Then, since necessity and fate withstand me,
I'll strive to enter at a straighter passage ;
Your sudden aid and counsels, good my lords.

Stafford.

They are ours no longer than they do you service.

86 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Enter Constantius (as a monk, attended by other monks)
Vortiger stays him.

Vortiger.

Vessels of sanctity, be pleas'd a while
 To give attention to the general peace,
 Wherein Heav'n is serv'd too, though not so purely.
 Constantius, eldest son of Constantine,
 We here seize on thee for the general good,
 And in thy right of birth.

Constantius.

On me! for what, lords?

Vortiger.

The kingdom's government.

Constantius.

Oh Powers of blessedness,
 Keep me from growing downwards into earth again;
 I hope I am farther on my way than so; set forwards.

Vortiger.

You must not.

Constantius.

How!

Vortiger.

I know your wisdom
 Will light upon a way to pardon us,
 When you shall read in every Briton's brow
 The urg'd necessity of the times.

Constantius.

What necessity can there be in the world,
 But prayer and repentance? and that business
 I am about now.

Vortiger.

Hark, afar off still—
 We lose and hazard much—Holy Germans,
 And reverend Lupus, with all expedition
 Set the crown on him.

Constantius.

No such mark of fortune
 Comes near my head.

Vortiger.

My lord, we are forc'd to rule you.

Constantius.

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 37

Constantius.

Dare you receive Heaven's light in at your eye-lids,
And offer violence to religion?
Take heed, the very beam let in to comfort you
May be the fire to burn you. On these knees,
Hard'ned with zealous prayers, I entreat you
Bring not my cares into the world again.
Think with how much unwillingness and anguish
A glorified soul parted from the body
Would to that loathsome gaol again return:
With such great pain a well-subdued affection
Re-enters worldly business.

Vortiger.

Good my lord;
I know you cannot lodge so many virtues,
But patience must be one. As low as earth
We beg the freeness of your own consent,
Which else must be constrain'd; and time it were
Either agreed or forc'd. Speak, good my lord,
For you bind up more sins in this delay
Than thousand prayers can absolve again.

Constantius.

Were't but my death,
You should not kneel so long for't.

Vortiger.

'Twill be the death of millions if you rise not,
And that betimes too—Lend your help, my lords,
For fear all come too late.

Constantius.

This is a cruelty
That peaceful man did never suffer yet,
To make me die again, that once was dead,
And begin all that ended long before.
Hold, Lupus and Germanus, you are lights
Of holiness and religion; can you offer
The thing that is not lawful? Stand not I
Clear from all temporal charge by my profession?

Germanus.

Not when a time so violent calls upon you.
Who is born a prince, is born a general peace,

28 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Not his own only ; Heaven will look for him
In others actions, and will require him there,
What is in you religious, must be shown
In saving many more souls than your own.

Constantius.

Did not great Constantine, our noble father,
Deem me unfit for government and rule,
And therefore ⁴ prais'd me into this profession ?
Which I have held strict, and love it above glory,
Nor is there want of me, yourselves can witness,
Heaven hath provided largely for your peace,
And bless'd you with the lives of my two brothers ;
Fix your obedience there, leave me a servant.

All.

Long live Constantius, son of Constantine,
King of Great Britain !

Constantius.

I do feel a want
And extream poverty of joy within ;
The peace I had is parted 'mongst rude men :
To keep them quiet I have lost it all.
What can the kingdom gain by my undoing ?
That riches is not best, though it be mighty,
That's purchas'd by the ruin of another ;
Nor can the peace, so filch'd, ever thrive with them :
And if't be worthily held sacrilege
To rob a temple, 'tis no less offence
To ravish meditations from the soul
(The consecrated altar in a man.)
And all their hopes will be beguil'd in me ;
I know no more the way to temporal rule,
Than he that's born and has his years come to him
In a rough desert ; well may the weight kill me,
And that's the fairest good I look for from it.

Vortiger.

Not so, great king ; here stoops a faithful servant
Would sooner perish under it with cheerfulness,
Than your meek soul should feel oppression

Of

⁴ prais'd me.] Probably we should read *pray'd me* ; that is, *desired me*
to go into this profession or pressed me. S P

Of ruder cares : such common coarse employments
 Cast upon me your servant, upon Vortiger ;
 I see you are not made for noise and pains,
 Clamours of suitors, injuries, and redresses,
 Millions of actions, rising with the sun,
 Like laws still ending, and yet never done,
 Of power to turn a great man to the state
 Of his marble monument, with over-watching.
 To be oppress'd is not requir'd of you, my lord,
 But only to be king. The broken sleeps
 Let me take from you, sir ; the toils and troubles,
 All that is burthenous in authority,
 Please you lay it on me ; and what is glorious
 Receive it to your own brightness.

Constantius.

Worthy Vortiger,
 If't were not sin to grieve another's patience
 With what we cannot tolerate ourself,
 How happy were I in thee, and thy love !
 There's nothing makes man feel his miseries
 But knowledge only. Reason, that is plac'd
 For man's director, is his chief afflictor :
 For though I cannot bear the weight myself,
 I cannot have that barrenness of remorse
 To see another groan under my burthen.

Vortiger.

I am quite blown up a conscionable way :
 There's even a trick of murth'ring in some pity.
 The death of all my hopes I see already.
 There was no other likelihood ; for religion
 Was never friend of mine yet.

[*Aside.*

Constantius.

Holy partners in strictest abstinence,
 Cruel necessity hath forc'd me from you.
 We part, I fear, for ever : but in mind
 I will be always here ; here let me stay.

Devonshire.

My lord, you know the times.

Constantius.

Farewell, blest souls ; I fear I shall offend :

He

90 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

He that draws tears from you, takes your best friend.

[*Exeunt all but Vortiger.*]

Vortiger.

Can the great motion of ambition stand,
Like wheels false wrought by an unskilful hand ?
Then Time, stand thou too : let no hopes arrive
At their sweet wishfulness, till mine set forwards,
Would I could stay thy existence as I can
Thy glassy counterfeit in hours of sand,
I'd keep thee turn'd down, till my wishes rose ;
Then we'd both rise together.
What several inclinations are in nature ?
How much is he disquieted, and wears royalty
Disdainfully upon him ! like a curse :
Calls a fair crown the weight of his afflictions !
When here's a soul would sink under the burthen.
Yet well recovered—I will use all means
To vex authority from him, and in all
Study what most may discontent his blood,
Making my mask my zeal to th' public good.
Not possible a richer policy
Can have conception in the thought of man.

Enter two Graziers.

1st Grazier.

An honourable life inclose your lordship !

Vortiger.

Now, what are you ?

2d Grazier.

Graziers, if't like your lordship.

Vortiger.

So it should seem by your inclosures.
What's your affair with me ?

1st Grazier.

We are your petitioners, my lord.

Vortiger.

For what ? Depart ; petitioners to me !
You have well deserv'd my grace and favour.
Have you not a ruler after your own election ?
Hye you to court,

Get

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 91

Get near and close ; be loud
And bold enough : you cannot chuse but speed. [Exit.
2d Grazier.

If that will do't,
We have throats wide enough, we'll put them to't.
[Exeunt.

Dumb show. Fortune discovered ; in her hand a round ball full of lots ; then enter Hengist and Horsus, with others : they draw lots ; and having opened them, all depart save Hengist and Horsus, who kneel and embrace : then enter Roxena, seeming to take leave of Hengist in great passion, but more especially and warily of Horsus, her lover ; she departs one way, Hengist and Horsus another.

Enter Raynulpb.

When Germany was overgrown
With sons of peace, too thickly sown,
Several guides were chosen then
By destin'd lots, to lead out men ;
And they whom fortune here withstands,
Must prove their fates in other lands.
On these two captains fell the lot ;
But that which must not be forgot,
Was Roxena's cunning grief ;
Who from her father, like a thief,
Hid her best and truest tears
Which her lustful lover wears,
In many a stol'n and wary kiss
Unseen of father : maids do this,
Yet highly scorn to be call'd strumpets too ;
But what they lack of't I'll be judg'd by you.

[Exit.

Enter Vertiger, Feltmaker, Button-maker, and Grazier, petitioners.

Vertiger.

This way his majesty comes.

All.

Thank your good lordship.

92 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Vortiger.

When you hear yon door open—

All.

Very good, my lord.

Vortiger.

Be ready with your several suits, put forward.

Grazier.

That's a thing every man does naturally, fir,
That is a suitor, and doth mean to speed.

Vortiger.

'Tis well you are so deep learn'd ; take no denials.

All.

No, my good lord.

Vortiger.

Not any, if you love
The prosperity of your suits ; you mar all utterly,
And overthrow your fruitful hopes for ever,
If either fifth or sixth, nay tenth repulse,
Fasten upon your bashfulness.

All.

Say you so, my lord ?

We can be troublesome if we list.

Vortiger.

I know it.

I felt it but too late in the general sum
Of your rank brotherhood, which now I thank you for,
While this vexation is in play, I'll study
For a second ; then a third to that : one still
To vex another, that he shall be glad
To yield up power ; if not, it shall be had. [Exit.

Button-maker.

Hark ! I protest, my heart was coming upwards :
I thought the door had opened.

Graziers.

Marry, would it had, fir.

Button-maker.

I have such a treacherous heart of my own, 'twill throb
At the very fall of a farthingale.

Grazier.

Grazier.

Not if it fall on the rushes^s.

Button-maker.

Yes truly, if there be
No light in the room, I shall throb presently.
The first time it took me, my wife was in the company :
I remember the room was not half so light as this ;
But I'll be sworn I was a whole hour in finding her.

Grazier.

By'r lady y'had a long time of throbbing of it then.

Button-maker.

Still I felt men, but I could feel no women ;
I thought they had been all sunk. I have made a vow
for't,
I'll never have meeting while I live, by candle-light
again.

Grazier.

Yes, fir, in lanthorns :
But I'll never trust candle naked again.

Grazier.

Hark, hark ! stand close : it opens now indeed !

Button-maker.

Oh majesty, what art thou ! I'd give any man
Half my suit to deliver my petition ; it is in the behalf
Of button-makers, and so it seems by my flesh.

Enter Constantius, and two gentlemen.

Constantius.

Pray do not follow me, unless you do it
To wonder at my garments: there's no cause
I give you why you should ; 'tis shame enough,
Methinks, to look upon myself :
It grieves me that more should. The other weeds
Became me better ; but the lords are pleas'd
To force me to wear these: I would not else.
I pray be satisfied ; I call'd you not.
Wonder of madness ! Can you stand so idle,
And know that you must die ?

First

^s Rushes.] With which anciently rooms used to be strewn.

94. THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

1st Gentleman.

We are all commanded, fir ;
Besides, it is our duties to your grace,
To give attendance.

Constantius.

What a wild thing is this ?
No marvel why you tremble at death's name,
When you'll not see the cause why you are fools.
For charity's sake, desist here, I pray you :
Make not my presence guilty of your sloth.
Withdraw, young men, and find you honest business.

2d Gentleman.

What hopes have we to rise by following him ?
I'll give him over shortly.

1st Gentleman.

He's too nice,
Too holy for young gentlemen to follow
That have good faces, and sweet running fortunes.

Constantius.

Eight hours a day in serious contemplation,
Is but a bare allowance ; no higher food
To the soul, than bread and water to the body ;
And that's but needful ; then more would do better.

Button-maker.

Let us all kneel together ; 'twill move pity.
I have been at the begging of a hundred suits.

Constantius.

How happy am I in the sight of you !
Here are religious souls that lose not time.
With what devotion do they point at heaven,
And seem to check me that am too remiss !
I bring my zeal among you, holy men :
If I see any kneel, and I sit out,
That hour is not well spent. Methinks, strict souls,
You have been of some order in your times.

Graziers.

Graziers and braziers some, and this a felt-maker.

Button-maker.

Here's his petition and mine, if it like your grace.

Granter.

Grazier.

Look upon mine, I am the longest suitor,
I was undone seven years ago.

Constantius.

You have mock'd my good hopes; call you these petitions?

Why there's no form of prayer among them all.

Button-maker.

Yes, in the bottom there's half a line prays for your majesty,

If you look on mine.

Constantius.

Make your requests to heaven, not to me.

Button-maker.

'Las! mine's a supplication for brass buttons, sir.

Felt-monger.

There's a great enormity in wool,
I beseech your grace consider it.

Grazier.

Pastures rise two-pence an acre, what will this world come to?

Button-maker.

I do beseech your Grace.

Grazier.

Good your Grace.

Constantius.

Oh! this is one of my afflictions
That with the crown enclos'd me, I must bear it.

Grazier.

Your grace's answer to my supplication.

Button-maker.

Mine, my lord.

Constantius.

No violent storm lasts ever, that's the comfort of it.

Felt-maker.

Your highness's answer.

Grazier.

We are almost all undone, the country beggar'd.

Button-maker.

See, see, he points at heaven, as who should say

There's

96 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

There's enough there ; but 'tis a great way thither.
 There's no good to be done, I see that already ;
 We may all spend our mouths like a company of hounds
 In chase of a royal deer, and then go home
 And fall to cold mutton bones, when we have done.

Grazier.

My wife will hang me, that's my currish destiny.

[*Exeunt.*

Constantius.

Thanks, Heaven ! 'tis over now ; we should never know
 rightly

The sweetness of a calm, but for a storm.
 Here's a wish'd hour for contemplation now ;
 All's still and silent ; here is a true kingdom.

Enter Vortiger.

Vortiger.

My lord.

Constantius.

Again ?

Vortiger.

Alas ! this is but early
 And gentle to the troops of business
 That flock about authority : you must forthwith
 Settle your mind to marry.

Constantius.

How, to marry ?

Vortiger.

And suddenly, there's no pause to be given ;
 The people's wills are violent, and covetous
 Of a succession from your loins.

Constantius.

From me there can come none ; a profess'd abstinence
 Hath set a virgin seal upon my blood,
 And alter'd all the course ; the heat I have,
 Is all inclos'd within a zeal to virtue,
 And that's not fit for earthly propagation ;
 Alas ! I shall but forfeit all their hopes,
 I'm a man made without desires, tell them.

Vortiger.

I prov'd them with such words, but all were fruitless :
 A virgin

A virgin of the highest subject's blood
They have pick'd out for your embrace, and send her,
Bless'd with their general wishes, into fruitfulness.
Lo ! where she comes, my lord.

Enter Castiza.

Constantius.

I never felt
Th' unhappy hand of misery till this touch ;
A patience I could find for all but this.

Castiza.

My lord, your vow'd love ventures me but dangerously.

Vortiger.

'Tis but to strengthen a vexation politic.

Constantius.

That's an uncharitable practice, trust me, sir.

Vortiger.

No more of that.

Castiza.

But say he should affect me, sir,
How should I 'scape him then ? I have
But one faith, my lord, and that you have already,
Our late contract is a divine witness to't.

Vortiger.

I am not void of shifting-rooms and helps
For all projects that I commit with you.

[*Exit.*

Castiza.

This is an ungodly way to come to honour,
I do not like it : I love lord Vortiger,
But not these practices, they're too uncharitable.

Constantius.

Are you a virgin ?

Castiza.

Never yet, my lord, known to the will of man.

Constantius.

Oh blessed creature !

And does too much felicity make you surfeit ?
Are you in soul assur'd there is a state
Prepar'd for you, for you, a glorious one,
In midst of heav'n, now in the state you stand in ?

And had you rather, after much known misery,
 Cares and hard labours, mingled with a curse,
 Throng but to the door, and hardly get a place there?
 Think, hath the world a folly like this madness?
 Keep still that holy and immaculate fire,
 Your chaste lamp of eternity; 'tis a treasure
 Too precious for death's moment to partake,
 This twinkling of short life. Disdain as much
 To let mortality know you, as stars
 To kiss the pavement: y^e have a substance
 As excellent as theirs, holding your pureness.
 They look upon corruption, as you do,
 But are stars still; be you a virgin too.

Castiza.

I'll never marry. What though my truth be engag'd
 To Vortiger? forsaking all the world
 I save it well, and do my faith no wrong.
 Y^e have mightily prevail'd, great virtuous sir,
 I am bound eternally to praise your goodness;
 My thoughts henceforth shall be as pure from man,
 As ever made a virgin's name immortal.

Constantius.

I will do that for joy, I never did,
 Nor ever will again.

As he kisses her, enter Vortiger and gentlemen.

Gentleman.

My lord, he's taken.

Vortiger.

I am sorry for't, I like not that so well,
 They're something too familiar for their time, methinks.
 This way of kissing is no way to vex him;
 Why I, that have a weaker faith and patience,
 Could endure more than that, coming from a woman.
 Dispatch, and bring his answer speedily. [Exit.

Gentleman.

My lord, my gracious lord!

Constantius.

Beshrew thy heart.

Gentleman.

They all attend your grace.

Constantius.

Constantius.

I would not have them ;
'Twould please me better if they'd all depart
And leave me to myself, or put me out
And take it to themselves.

Gentleman.

The noon is past,
Meat's on the table.

Constantius.

Meat ! away, get from me,
Thy memory is diseas'd ; what saint's eve's this ?

Gentleman.

Saint Agatha's, I take it.

Constantius.

Is it so ?

I am not worthy to be serv'd before her,
And so return, I pray.

Gentleman.

He'll starve the guard
If this be suffer'd ; if we set court-bellies
By a monastery clock, he that breaks a fellow's pate now
Will not be able to crack a louse within this twelvemonth.

[*Exit.*

Constantius.

'Tis sure forgetfulness, and not man's will,
That leads him forth into licentious ways ;
He cannot certainly commit such errors,
And think upon them truly as they are acting.
Why's abstinence ordain'd, but for such seasons ?

Enter Vortiger.

Vortiger.

My lord, y' have pleas'd to put us to much pains,
But we confess 'tis portion of our duty :
Will your grace please to walk ? dinner stays for you.

Constantius.

I have answer'd that already.

Vortiger.

But, my lord,
We must not so yield to you, pardon me,
'Tis for the general good, you must be rul'd, sir,

H 2

Your

100. THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Your health and life is dearer to us now ;
Think where you are, at court, this is no monastery.

Constantius.

But, fir, my conscience keeps still where it was.
I may not eat this day.

Vortiger.

We have sworn you shall,
And plentifully too, we must preserve you, fir,
Though you be wilful ; 'tis no slight condition
To be a king.

Constantius.

Would I were less than man !

Vortiger.

You will make the people rise, my lord,
In great despair of your continuance,
If you neglect the means that must sustain you.

Constantius.

I never eat on eves.

Vortiger.

But now you must,
It concerns others healths that you take food ;
I have chang'd your life, you well may change your mood.

Constantius.

This is beyond all cruelty.

Vortiger.

'Tis our care, my lord.

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T II. S C E N E I.

Enter Vortiger and Castiza.

Castiza.

MY lord, I am resolv'd, tempt me no farther,
'Tis all to fruitless purpose.

Vortiger.

Are you well ?

Castiza.

Never so perfect in the truth of health
As at this instant.

Vortiger.

Vertiger.

Then I doubt my own,
Or that I am not waking.

Castiza.

Would you were then,
You'd praise my resolution.

Vertiger.

This is wondrous !
Are you not mine by contract ?

Castiza.

'Tis most true, my lord,
And I am better blest'd in't than I look'd for,
In that I am confin'd in faith so strictly ;
I am bound, my lord, to marry none but you,
You'll grant me that ; and you I'll never marry.

Vertiger.

It draws me into violence and hazard,
I saw you kiss the king.

Castiza.

I grant you so, sir ;
Where could I take my leave of the world better ?
I wrong'd not you in that, you will acknowledge
A king is the best part of it.

Vertiger.

Oh my passion !

Castiza.

I see you something yielding to infirmity ; sir,
I take my leave.

Vertiger.

Why, 'tis not possible !

Castiza.

The fault is in your faith ; time I were gone
To give it better strengthening.

Vertiger.

Hark you, lady.

Castiza.

Send your intent to the next monastery ;
There you shall find my answer ever after,
And so with my last duty to your lordship,
For whose prosperity I will pray as heartily
As for my own.

H 3.

[Exit.
Vertiger.

Vortiger.

How am I serv'd in this?
 I offer a vexation to the king,
 He sends it home into my blood with 'vantage.
 I'll put off time no longer, I have brought him
 Into most mens neglects, calling his zeal
 A deep pride hallowed over, love of ease
 More than devotion, or the public benefit;
 Which catcheth many men's beliefs. I am stronger too
 In people's wishes, their affections point at me.
 I lose much time and glory, that redeem'd,
 She that now flies returns with joy and wonder,
 Greatness and woman's wish ne'er keep asunder. [Exit.

Dumb show. Enter two villains, to them Vortiger, who seems to solicit them with gold; then swears them, and exit. Enter Constantius meditating, they rudely strike down his book, draw their swords, he kneels and spreads his arms, they kill him, hurry him off. Enter Vortiger, Devonshire, and Stafford, in conference; to them the villains presenting the head, he seems sorrowful, and in rage stabs them both. Then they crown Vortiger, and fetch in Castiza, who comes unwillingly; he hales her, and they crown her; Aurelius and Uther, brothers of Constantius, seeing him crowned, draw and fly.

Enter Raynulpb.

Raynulpb.

When nothing could prevail to tire
 The good king's patience, they did hire
 Two wicked rogues to take his life,
 In whom, a while there fell a strife
 Of pity and fury; but the gold
 Made pity faint, and fury bold.
 Then to Vortiger they bring
 The head of that religious king,
 Who feigning grief, to clear his guilt,
 Makes the slaughterers blood be spilt.
 Then crown they him, and force the maid,
 That vow'd a virgin-life, to wed.

Such

Such a strength great power extends,
It conquers fathers, kindred, friends.
And since fates pleas'd to change her life,
She proves as holy in a wife.
More to tell, were to betray
What deeds in their own tongues must say;
Only this, the good king dead,
The brothers poor in safety fled.

[Exit.

Enter Vortiger (crowned) a gentleman meeting him.

Gentleman.

My lord.

Vortiger.

I fear thy news will fetch a curse,
It comes with such a violence.

Gentleman.

The people are up in arms against you.

Vortiger.

Oh this dream of glory!
Sweet power, before I can have time to taste thee,
Must I for ever lose thee? What's the imposthume
That swells them now?

Gentleman.

The murder of Constantius.

Vortiger.

Ulcers of realms! they hated him alive,
Grew weary of the minute of his reign,
Call'd him an evil of their own electing,
And is their ignorant zeal so fiery now,
When all their thanks are cold? The mutable hearts
That move in their false breasts! provide me safety,
Hark, I hear ruin threaten me with a voice
That imitates thunder,

Enter a second gentleman.

2d Gentleman.

Where's the king?

Vortiger.

Who takes him?

2d Gentleman.

Send peace to all your royal thoughts, my lord!

H 4

A fleet

104 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

A fleet of valiant Saxons newly landed
Offer the truth of all their service to you.

Vortiger.

Saxons! my wishes, let them have free entrance,
And plenteous welcomes from all hearts that love us;
They never could come happier.

Enter Hengist, Horfus, and soldiers.

Hengist.

Health, power, and victory to Vortiger!

Vortiger.

There can be no more pleasure to a king,
If all the languages earth spake were ranfack'd.
Your names I know not, but so much good fortune
And warranted worth lightens your fair aspects,⁶
I cannot but in arms of love enfold you.

Hengist.

The mistress of our births hope, fruitful Germany,
Calls me Hengistus, and this captain Horfus,
A man low-built, but yet in deeds of arms
Flame is not swifter: we are all, my lord,
The sons of fortune, she hath sent us forth
To thrive by the red sweat of our own merits;
And since, after the rage of many a tempest,
Our fates have cast us upon Britain's bounds,
We offer you the first-fruits of our wounds.

Vortiger.

Which we shall dearly prize; the mean'st blood spent
Shall at wealth's fountain make its own content.

Hengist.

You double vigour in us then, my lord,
Pay is the soul of such as thrive by th' sword. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Vortiger and gentlemen. Alarm and skirmishes.

First Gentleman.

My lord, these Saxons bring a fortune with them
They say any Roman success.

⁶ *And warranted worth lightens your fair aspects,]* Alluding to the story of Pope Gregory's admiring the beauty of the English youths at Rome, — Beda Hist. c. i.

S. P.

Vortiger.

Vortiger.

On, speak, forwards,
I will not take one minute from thy tidings.

First Gentleman.

The main supporters of this insurrection
They have taken prisoners ; and the rest so tame,
They stoop to the least grace that flows from mercy.

Vortiger.

Never came power guided by better stars.
Than these men's fortitudes : yet they're misbelievers,
Which to my reason is wondrous.

Enter Hengist and Horsus, with prisoners.

You've given me such a first taste of your worth,
'Twill never from my love ; when life is gone,
The memory sure will follow, my soul still
Participating immortality with it.
But here's the misery of earth's limited glory,
There's not a way reveal'd to any honour
Above the same which your own merits give you.

Hengist.

Indeed, my lord, we hold, when all's summ'd up,
That can be made for worth to be express'd,
The same that a man wins himself is best,
That he may call his own ; honours put to him,
Make him no more a man than his clothes do,
And are as soon ta'en off ; for in the warmth
The heat comes from the body, not the weeds :
So man's true fame must strike from his own deeds
And since by this event which fortune speaks us,
This land appears the fair predestin'd soil
Ordain'd for our good hap, we crave, my lord,
A little earth to thrive on, what you please,
Where we'll but keep a nursery of good spirits
To fight for you and yours.

Vortiger.

Sir, for our treasure,
'Tis open to your merits, as our love ;
But for y'are strangers in religion chiefly,
(Which is the greatest alienation can be,

And

106 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

And breeds most factions in the blood of men)
I must not yield to that.

Enter Simon with a hide.

Hengist.

S'precious, my lord,
I see a pattern, be it but so little
As yon poor hide will compass.

Vortiger.

How, the hide !

Hengist.

Rather than nothing, sir.

Vortiger.

Since y'are so reasonable,
Take so much in the best part of our kingdom.

Hengist.

We thank your grace.—Rivers from bubbling springs
Have rise at first, and great from abject things.
Stay yonder fellow, he came luckily,
And shall fare well for't, whate'er he be,
We'll thank our fortune in rewarding him.

Horfus.

Stay, fellow.

Simon.

How, fellow ! 'tis more than you know
Whether I be your fellow or no, I am sure
You see me not.

Hengist.

Come, what's the price of your hide ?

Simon.

Oh unreasonable villain !

He would buy the house over a man's head—
I'll be sure now to make my bargain wisely,
They may buy me out of my skin else—
Whose hide would you buy, mine or the beast's ?
There is little difference in their complexions,
I think mine is the blacker of the two ;
You shall see for your love, and buy for your money.
A pestilence on you all, how have you deceiv'd me ?

You

You buy an ox hide ! you buy a calf's gather—
They are all hungry soldiers, and I took them
For honest shoe-makers.

Hengist.

Hold, fellow, pr'ythee hold ;
Right a fool worldling that kicks at all good fortune.
Whose man art thou ?

Simon.

I am a servant, yet a masterless man, fir.

Hengist.

Pr'ythee how can that be ?

Simon.

Very nimbly, fir ;
My master is dead, and now I serve my mistress ;
Ergo, I am a masterless man ; she's now a widow,
And I am the foreman of her tan pit.

Hengist.

Hold you, and thank your fortune, not your wit.

Simon.

Faith, and I thank your bounty, and not your wisdom !
You are not troubled with wit neither greatly, it seems—
Now, by this light, a nest of yellow-hammers !
What will become of me ? If I can keep
All these without hanging myself,
I am happier than a hundred of my neighbours.
You shall have my skin into the bargain,
Then if I chance to die like a dog,
The labour will be sav'd of fleaing me ;
I'll undertake, fir, you shall have
All the skins in our parish at this price,
Mens and womens.

Hengist.

Sirrah, give good ear to me ;
Now take the hide and cut it into the slend'rest thongs
That can bear strength to hold.

Simon.

That were a jest i'faith : spoil all the leather ?
Sin and pity ! why 'twould shoe half your army.

Hengist.

Do it, I bid you.

Simon.

Simon.

What, cut all this into thongs? Hum,
 This is like the vanity of your Roman gallants,
 That cannot wear good suits, but they must have them
 Cut and slash'd in giggets, that the very crimson taffaties
 Sit blushing at their follies. I would
 I might persuade you from this humour of cutting,
 'Tis but a swaggering condition and nothing profitable:
 What if it were but well pink'd? 'twould last
 Longer for a summer suit.

Hengist.

What a cross lump of ignorance have I lighted on!
 I must be forc'd to beat my drift into him—
 Look you, to make you wiser than your parents,
 I have so much ground given me as this hide will compass,
 Which, as it is, is nothing.

Simon.

Nothing, quoth a?
 Why, 'twill not keep a hog.

Hengist.

Now with the vantage
 Cut into several pieces, 'twill stretch far
 And make a liberal circuit.

Simon.

A shame on your crafty hide!
 Is this your cunning? I have learn'd more knavery
 Now than I shall claw off while I live.
 I'll go purchase land by cow-tails and undo all the parish,
 Three good bulls pizzles would set up a man for ever;
 This is like a pin a day to set up a haberdasher of small
 wares.

Hengist.

Thus men that mean to thrive, as we must learn,
 Set in a foot at first.

Simon.

A foot d'you call it?
 The devil's in that foot that takes up all this leather.

Hengist.

Dispatch, and cut it carefully, with all the advantage,
 firrah.

Simon.

Simon.

You could never have lighted upon such a fellow
To serve your turn, captain ; I have such a trick
Of stretching too, I learn'd it of a tanner's man
That was hang'd last sessions at Maidstone.
I'll warrant you I'll get you a mile and a half
More than y'are aware of.

Hengist.

Pray serve me so as oft as you will, sir.

Simon.

I am casting about for nine acres to make
A garden plot out of one of the buttocks.

Hengist.

'Twill be a good soil for nose-gays.

Simon.

'Twill be a good soil for cabbages, to stuff out the guts
Of your followers there.

Hengist.

Go, see it carefully perform'd ;
It is the first foundation of our fortunes
On Britain's earth, and ought to be embrac'd
With a respect near link'd to adoration.
Methinks it sounds to me a fair assurance
Of large honours and hopes ; does it not, captain ?

Horfus.

How many have begun with less at first,
That have had emperors from their bodies sprung,
And left their carcasses as much in monument
As would erect a college ?

Hengist.

There's the fruits
Of their religious shew too, to lie rotting
Under a million spent in gold and marble.

Horfus.

But where shall we make choice of our ground, captain ?

Hengist.

About the fruitful flanks of uberous Kent,
A fat and olive soil, there we came in.
Oh captain, he has given he knows not what.

Horfus.

Horsus.

Long may he give fo!

Hengist.

I tell thee, firrah, he that begg'd a field
Of fourscore acres for a garden-plot,
'Twas pretty well; but he came short of this.

Horsus.

Send over for more Saxons.

Hengist.

With all speed, captain.

Horsus.

Especially for Roxena.

Hengist.

Who! My daughter?

Horsus.

That star of Germany, forget not her, fir:
She is a fair and fortunate maid;
Fair she is, and fortunate may she be;
But in maid lost for ever. My desire
Has been the close confusion of that name.
A treasure 'tis, able to make more thieves
Than cabinets set open to entice;
Which learn them theft that never knew the vice.

Hengist.

Come, I'll dispatch with speed.

Horsus.

Do, forget none.

Hengist.

Marry, pray help my memory.

Horsus.

Roxena, you remember?

Hengist.

What more, dear fir?

[A shouting heard.]

Horsus.

I see your memory's clear, fir.

Hengist.

Those shouts leap'd from our army.

Horsus.

They were too cheerful
To voice a bad event.

Hengist.

Now, fir, your news?

Enter a gentleman.

Gentleman.

Roxena the fair—

Hengist.

True, she shall be sent for.

Gentleman.

She's here, fir.

Hengist.

What say'st?

Gentleman.

She's come, fir.

Horfus.

A new youth begins me o'er again.

Gentleman.

Follow'd you close, fir,
With such a zeal as daughter never equall'd.
Expos'd herself to all the merciless dangers
Set in mankind or fortune; not regarding
Aught but your fight.

Hengist.

Her love is infinite to me.

Horfus.

Most charitably censur'd: 'tis her cunning,
The love of her own lust, which makes a woman
Gallop down hill as fearless as a drunkard.
There's no true loadstone in the world but that:
It draws them through all storms by sea or shame.
Life's loss is thought too small to pay that game.

Gentleman.

What follows more of her will you take strongly?

Hengist.

How!

Gentleman.

Nay, 'tis worth your wonder.
Her heart, joy-ravish'd with your late success,
Being the early morning of your fortunes,
So prosperously new opening at her coming,

She

112 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

She takes a cup of gold, and, 'midst the army,
Teaching her knee a reverend chearfulness,
Which well became her, drank a liberal health
To the king's joys and yours, the king in presence ;
Who with her fight, but her behaviour chiefly,
Or chief but one or both, I know not which ;
But he's so far 'bove my expression caught,
'Twere art enough for one man's time and portion
To speak him and miss nothing.

Hengist.

This is astonishing !

Horfus.

Oh ! this ends bitter now. Our close-hid flame
Will break out of my heart : I cannot keep it.

Hengist.

Gave you attention, captain ? How now, man ?

Horfus.

A kind of grief about these times of the moon still,
I feel a pain like a convulsion,
A cramp at heart, I know not what name fits it.

Hengist.

Nor never seek one for it, let it go
Without a name ; would all griefs were serv'd so.

Flourish. Enter Vortiger, Roxena, &c.

Horfus.

A love-knot already ? arm in arm !

Vortiger.

What's he lays claim to her ?

Hengist.

In right of father-hood
I challenge an obedient part.

Vortiger.

Take it, and send back the rest.

Hengist.

What means your grace ?

Vortiger.

You'll keep no more than what
Belongs to you ?

Hengist.

That's all, my lord, it all belongs to me,

I keep

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 111

I keep the husband's interest till he come ;
Yet out of duty and respect to majesty,
I send her back your servant.

Vortiger.

My mistress, sir, or nothing.

Hengist.

Come again,
I never thought to hear so ill of thee.

Vortiger.

How, sir, so ill ?

Hengist.

So beyond detestable.

To be an honest vassal is some calling,
Poor is the worst of that, shame comes not to't ;
But Mistress, that the only common bait
Fortune sets at all hours, catching whore with it,
And plucks them up by clusters. There's my sword, my
Jord ;

And if your strong desires aim at my blood,
Which runs too purely there, a nobler way
Quench it in mine.

Vortiger.

I ne'er took sword in vain ;
Hengist, we here create thee earl of Kent.

Horfus.

Oh, that will do't.

Vortiger.

What ails our friend ? Look to him.

Roxena.

Oh, 'tis his epilepsy ; I know it well :
I help'd him once in Germany ; comes it again ?
A virgin's right hand stroak'd upon his heart
Gives him ease straight ; but it must be a pure virgin,
Or else it brings no comfort.

Vortiger.

What a talk
She puts upon herself, unurg'd purity !
The truth of this will bring love's rage into me.

Roxena.

Oh, this would mad a woman ; there's no proof

I

In

114 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

In love to indiscretion.

Horfus.

Pish ! this cures not.

Roxena.

Dost think I'll ever wrong thee ?

Horfus.

Oh most feelingly !

But I'll prevent it now, and break thy neck
With thy own cunning. Thou hast undertaken
To give me help, to bring in royal credit
Thy crack'd virginity ; but I'll spoil all,
I will not stand on purpose, though I could,
But fall still, to disgrace thee.

Roxena.

What, you will not ?

Horfus.

I have no other way to help myself ;
For when th'art known to be a whore, impostress,
I shall be sure to keep thee.

Roxena.

Oh, fir, shame me not :
You've had what is most precious ; try my faith ;
Undo me not at first in chaste opinion.

Horfus.

All this art shall not make me feel my legs.

Roxena.

I Pr'ythee do not wilfully confound me.

Horfus.

Well, I am content for this time to recover,
To save thy credit, and bite in my pain ;
But if thou ever fail'st me, I will fall,
And thou shalt never get me up again.

Roxena.

Agreed 'twixt you and I, fir—See, my lord,
A poor maid's work ! the man may pass for health now,
Among the clearest bloods, and those are nicest.

Fortiger.

I have heard of women brought men on their knees,
But few that e'er restor'd them—How now, captain ?

Horfus.

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH: 115

Horfus.

My lord, methinks I could do things past man,
I'm so renew'd in vigour; I long most
For violent exercise to take me down;
My joy's so high in blood, I'm above frailty.

Vortiger.

My lord of Kent!

Hengist.

Your love's unworthy creature.

Vortiger.

Seest thou this fair chain? Think upon the means
To keep it link'd for ever.

Hengist.

Oh! my lord,
'Tis many degrees fundred from my hope;
Besides, your grace has a young virtuous queen.

Vortiger.

I say, think on it.

Horfus.

If this wind hold, I fall to my old disease.

Vortiger.

There's no fault in thee but to come so late:
All else is excellent: I chide none but fate. [Exit.

A C T III. S C E N E I.

Enter Horfus and Roxena.

Roxena.

I Have no conceit now that you ever lov'd me,
But as lust led you for the time.

Horfus.

See! see!

Roxena.

Do you pine at my advancement, sir?

I 2

Horfus.

Horfus.

Oh barrenness
 Of understanding ! what a right love is this ?
 'Tis you that fall ; I that am reprehended,
 What height of honours, eminence of fortune,
 Should ravish me from you ?

Roxena.

Who can tell that, sir ?
 What's he can judge of a man's appetite
 Before he sees him eat ? Who knows the strength
 Of any's constancy, that never yet was tempted ?
 We can call nothing our own, if they be deeds to come
 They're only ours, when they are pass'd and done.
 How blest are you above your apprehension,
 If your desire would lend you so much patience,
 T' examine the adventurous condition
 Of our affections, which are full of hazard,
 And draw in the times goodness to defend us !
 First, this bold course of ours cannot last long ;
 Nor ever does in any without shame ;
 And that, you know, brings danger ; and the greater
 My father is in blood, as he is well risen,
 The greater will the storm of his rage be
 Against his blood's wronging : I have cast for this.
 'Tis not advancement that I love alone :
 'Tis love of shelter, to keep shame unknown.

Horfus.

Oh, were I sure of thee, as 'tis impossible
 There to be ever sure where there's no hold,
 Your pregnant hopes should not be long in rising.

Roxena.

By what assurance you have held me thus far,
 Which you found firm, despair you not in that.

Horfus.

True ; that was good security for the time :
 But in a change of state, when y're advanc'd,
 You women have a French toy in your pride,
 You make your friend come crouching ; or perhaps,
 To bow in th' hams, the better he is put
 To complement three hours with your chief woman,

Then

Then perhaps not admitted, no nor ever,
That's the more noble fashion. Forgetfulness
Is the most pleasing virtue they can have,
That do spring up from nothing; for by the same
Forgetting all, they forget whence they came;
An excellent property of oblivion.

Roxena.

I pity all the fortunes of poor women
In my own unhappiness. When we have given
All that we have to men, what's our requital?
An ill-fac'd jealousy, that resembles much
The mistrustfulness of an insatiate thief,
That scarce believes he has all, though he has stripp'd
The true man naked, and left nothing on him
But the hard cord that binds him. So are we
First robb'd, and then left bound by jealousy.
Take reason's advice, and you'll find it impossible
For you to lose me in this king's advancement,
Who's an usurper here, and as the kingdom,
So shall he have my love by usurpation;
The right shall be in thee still. My ascension
To dignity, is but to waft thee higher;
And all usurpers have the falling-sickness;
They cannot keep up long.

Horfus.

May credulous man
Put all his confidence in so weak a bottom,
And make a saving voyage?

Roxena.

Nay, as gainful as ever man yet made.

Horfus.

Go, take thy fortunes, aspire with my consent,
So thy ambition will be sure to prosper.
Speak the fair certainties of Britain's queen
Home to thy wishes.

Roxena.

Speak in hope, I may,
But not in certainty.

[The true man.] See Note 88 on Gammer Gurton's Needle. vol. n.
p. 64.

Horfus.

I say in both.
 Hope, and be sure I'll soon remove the lett^s
 That stands between thee and thy glory.

Roxena.

Life of love!
 If lost virginity can win such a day,
 I'll have no daughter but shall learn my way. [Exit.

Horfus.

'Twill be good work for him that first instructs them.
 May be some son of mine, got by this woman too,
 May match with their own sisters.—Peace, 'tis he.

Enter Vortiger.

Invention, fail me not; 'tis a gallant credit
 To marry one's whore bravely.

Vortiger.

Have I power
 Of life and death, and cannot command ease
 In my own blood? After I was a king,
 I thought I never should have felt pain more;
 That there had been a ceasing of all passions
 And common stings, which subjects use to feel,
 That were created with a patience fit
 For all extremities: But such as we
 Know not the way to suffer; then, to do it,
 How most prepost'rous 'tis?—Tush! riddles, riddles,
 I'll break through custom. Why should not the mind
 (The nobler part that's of us) be allow'd
 Change of affections, as our bodies are
 Change of food and raiment? I'll have it so.
 All fashions appear strange at first production;
 But this would be well follow'd—Oh captain!

Horfus.

My lord, I grieve for you: I scarce fetch breath,
 But a sigh hangs at the end of it: but this
 Is not the way, if you'd give way to counsel.

Vortiger.

Set me right then, or I shall heavily curse thee.

^s *The lett.*] The hindrancer prevention. See Note on *Damon and Pythias*, vol. I.

For lifting up my understanding to me,
To shew that I was wrong. Ignorance is safe;
I then slept happily. If knowledge mend me not,
Thou hast committed a most cruel sin,
To wake me into judgment, and then leave me.

Horfus.

I will not leave you, sir; that were rudely done.
First, y'have a flame too open and too violent,
Which, like blood-guiltiness in an offender,
Betrays him, when nought else can. Out with it, sir,
Or let some cunning coverture be made
Before your practice enters: 'twill spoil all else.

Vortiger.

Why, look you, sir, I can be as calm as silence
All the while music plays. Strike on, sweet friend,
As mild and merry as the heart of innocence.
I pr'ythee take my temper. Has a virgin
A heat more modest?

Horfus.

He does well to ask me:
I could have told him once—Why, here's a government,
There's not sweeter amity in friendship
Than in this league 'twixt you and health.

Vortiger.

Then, since
Thou find'st me capable of happiness,
Instruct me with the practice.

Horfus.

What will you say, my lord,
If I ensnare her in an action of lust?

Vortiger.

Oh, there were art to the life; but 'tis impossible:
I pr'ythee flatter me no farther with it.
Fy! so much sin as goes to make up that,
Will never prevail with her. Why, I'll tell you, sir,
She's so sin-killing modest, that if only
To move the question were enough adultery
To cause a separation, there's no gallant
So brassy impudent durst undertake
The words that shall belong to't.

Horfus.

Say you so, fir?
 There's nothing made in the world, but has a way ^w to't;
 Though some be harder than the rest to find,
 Yet one there is, that's certain; and I think,
 I have took the course to light on it.

Vortiger.

Oh, I pray for't.

Horfus.

I heard you lately say (from whence, my lord,
 My practice receiv'd life first) that your queen
 Still consecrates her time to contemplation;
 Takes solitary walks.

Vortiger.

Nay, late and early
 Commands her weak guard from her, which are but
 Women at strongest.

Horfus.

I like all this, my lord.
 And now, fir, you shall know what net is us'd
 In many places to catch modest women;
 Such as will never yield by prayers or gifts.
 Now there be some will catch up men as fast;
 But those she-fowlers nothing concern us:
 Their birding is at windows; ours abroad,
 Where ring-doves should be caught, that's married wives,
 Or chaste maids; what the appetite has a mind to.

Vortiger.

Make no pause then.

Horfus.

The honest gentlewoman,
 When nothing will prevail (I pity her now)
 Poor soul, she's entic'd forth by her own sex
 To be betray'd to man, who in some garden-house⁹
 Or remote walk, taking his lustful time,
 Binds darkness on her eye-lids, surprizes her;
 And having a coach ready, turns her in,

⁹ *In some garden house.*] See extract from Stubbes, as quoted in *The Miseries of enforced marriage*, vol. 5.

Hurrying

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 127

Hurrying her where he list for the sin's safety,
Making a rape of honour without words,
And at the low ebb of his lust, perhaps
Some three days after, sends her coach'd again
To the same place ; and, which would make most mad,
She's robb'd of all, yet knows not where she's robb'd ;
There's the dear precious mischief.

Vortiger.

Is this practis'd ?

Horsus.

Too much, my lord, to be so little known,
A springe to catch a maidenhead after sun-set ;
Clip it and send it home again to the city,
There 'twill ne'er be perceiv'd.

Vortiger.

My raptures want expression.
I conceit enough to make me fortunate, and thee great.

[*Exit.*

Horsus.

I praise it then, my lord—I knew 'twould take. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Enter Castiza with a book, and two ladies.

Castiza.

METHINKS you live strange lives !
When I see it not, it grieves me less.
You know how to ease me then ;
If you but knew how well I lov'd your absence,
You would bestow it upon me without asking.

First Lady.

Faith, for my part, were it no more
For ceremony than for love, you should
Walk long enough without my attendance,

And

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

And so think all my fellows, though they say nothing.
Books in womens hands are as much against
The hair¹⁰, methinks, as to see men wear stomachers,
Or night-railes. She that has the green-sickness,
And should follow her counsel, would die
Like an ass, and go to the worms like a fallad ;
Not I, so long as such a creature as man is made :
She is a fool that knows not what he is good for.

[*Exeunt Ladies.*

Castiza.

Though among life's elections, that of virgin
I did speak noblest of ; yet it has pleas'd the king
To send me a contented blessedness
In that of marriage, which I ever doubted.

Enter Vortiger and Horsus disguised.

I see the king's affection was a true one ;
It lasts and holds out long : that's no mean virtue
In a commanding man, though in great fear
At first I was enforc'd to venture on it.

Vortiger.

All's happy, clear, and safe.

Horsus.

The rest comes gently on.

Vortiger.

Be sure you seize on her full sight at first,
For fear of my discovery.

Horsus.

Now, fortune and I am sped.

Castiza.

Treason ! treason !

Horsus.

Sirrah, how stand you ? Prevent noise and clamour,
Or death shall end thy service.

Vortiger.

A sure cunning.

Castiza.

Oh, rescue ! rescue !

¹⁰ *Against the hair.*] See note to Alexander and Campaspe, vol. 2.

Horsus.

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 123

Horfus.

Dead her voice ; away, make speed.

Castiza.

No help ? no succour ?

Horfus.

Louder yet ? extend

Your voice to the last rack : you shall have leave now ;

Y'are far from any pity.

Castiza.

What's my fin ?

Horfus.

Contempt of man, and he's a noble creature,
And takes it in ill part to be despis'd.

Castiza.

I never despis'd any.

Horfus.

No ? you hold us

Unworthy to be lov'd : what call you that ?

Castiza.

I have a lord disproves you.

Horfus.

Pish, your lord ?

Y'are bound to love your lord, that is no thanks to you ;

You should love those you are not tied to love :

That's the right trial of a woman's charity.

Castiza.

I know not what you are, nor what my fault is.

If it be life you seek, whate'er you be,

Use no immodest words, and take it from me.

You kill me more in talking sinfully,

Than acting cruelly. Be so far pitiful,

To end me without words.

Horfus.

Long may you live,

'Tis the wish of a good subject ; 'tis not life

That I thirst after. Loyalty forbid

I should commit such treason. You mistake me :

I have no such bloody thought : only your love

Shall content me.

Castiza.

What said you, fir?

Horfus.

Thus plainly,
To strip my words as naked as my purpose,
I must and will enjoy thee—Gone already?
Look to her; bear her up; she goes apace:
I fear'd this still, and therefore come provided.
There's that will fetch life from a dying spark,
And make it spread a furnace—she's well straight.—
Pish, let her go; she stands, upon my knowledge,
Or else she counterfeits, I know the virtue.

Castiza.

Never did sorrows in afflicted woman
Meet with such cruelties. Such hard-hearted ways
Human invention never found before.
To call back life to live, is but ill taken
By some departing soul: then to force mine
Back to an eternal act of death in lust,
What is it but most execrable?

Horfus.

So, so:
But this is from my business. List to me:
Here you are now far from all hope of friendship,
Save what you make in me: 'scape me you cannot;
Send your soul that assurance: that resolv'd on,
You know not who I am, nor ever shall:
I need not fear you then; but give consent,
Then with the faithfulness of a true friend,
I'll open myself to you, fall your servant,
As I do now in hope, proud of submission,
And seal the deed up with eternal secrecy,
Nor death shall pluck it from me, much less
The king's authority or torture.

Vortiger.

I admire him.

Castiza.

Oh, fir, whate'er you are, I teach my knee
Thus to requite you; be content to take
Only my sight, as ransom for my honour,

And

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 135

And where you have but mock'd my eyes with darkneſs,
Pluck them quite out; all outward lights of body
I'll ſpare moſt willingly, but take not from me
That which muſt guide me to another world,
And leave me dark for ever: faſt without
That curſed pleaſure, which will make two ſouls
Endure a famine everlaſtingly.

Horſus.

This almoſt moves.

[*Aſide.*

Vortiger.

By this light he'll be taken.

[*Aſide.*

Horſus.

I'll wreſtle down all pity—What! will you conſent?

Caſtiza.

I'll never be ſo guilty.

Horſus.

Farewell words then,
You hear no more of me, but thus I ſeize you.

Caſtiza.

Oh! if a power above be reverenc'd by thee,
I bind thee by that name, by manhood, nobleneſs,
And all the charms of honour.

[*Vortiger ſnatches her away.*

Horſus.

Ah, ha, here's one caught
For an example: never was poor lady
So mock'd into falſe terror: with what anguiſh
She lies with her own lord! now ſhe could curſe
All into barrenneſs, and beguile herſelf by it.
Conceit's a powerful thing, and is indeed
Plac'd as a palate to taſte grief, or love,
And as that reliſhes, ſo we approve:
Hence comes it that our taſte is ſo beguil'd,
Changing pure blood for ſome that's mix'd and ſoil'd.

[*Exit.*

A C T

S C E N E. III.

Enter Hengist.

Hengist.

A Fair and fortunate constellation reign'd
When we set foot here, for from his first gift
(Which to a king's unbounded eyes seem'd nothing)
The compass of a hide, I have erected
A strong and spacious castle, yet contain'd myself
Within my limits, without check or censure.
Thither, with all th' observance of a subject,
The liveliest witness of a grateful mind,
I purpose to invite him and his queen,
And feast them nobly.

[*A noise without.*]

Barber.

We will enter, fir;
'Tis a state business, of a twelve-month long,
The chusing of a mayor.

Hengist.

What noise is that?

Taylor.

Sir, we must speak with the good earl of Kent;
Though we were never brought up to keep a door,
We are as honest, fir, as some that do.

Enter a Gentleman.

Hengist.

Now, fir, what's the occasion of their clamours?

Gentleman.

Please you, my lord, a company of townsmen
Are bent against all denials and resistance
To have speech with your lordship, and that you
Must end a difference, which none else can do.

Hengist.

Why then there's reason in their violence,

Which

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 223

Which I ne'er look'd for : first let in but one,

[*Exit Gentleman.*]

And as we relish him the rest come on.

'Tis no safe wisdom in a rising man

To slight off such as these ; nay, rather these

Are the foundations of a lofty work ;

We cannot build without them, and stand sure.

He that first ascends to a mountain's top

Must begin at the foot.—Now, sir, who comes ?

Enter Gentleman.

Gentleman.

They cannot yet agree, my lord, of that ;

They say 'tis worse now than it was before,

For where the difference was but between two,

Upon this coming first they're all at odds.

One says, he shall lose his place in the church by't ;

Another will not do his wife that wrong ;

And by their good wills they would all come first.

The strife continues in most heat, my lord,

Between a country barber and a taylor

Of the same town, and which your lordship names,

'Tis yielded by consent that he shall enter.

Hengist.

Here's no sweet coil, ' ' I am glad they are so reasonable ;

Call in the barber, if the tale be long,

He'll cut it short I trust, that's all the hope.

[" *Here's no sweet coil.*] It is observed by Dr. Warburton, (See note to 1st part *Henry 4th.* A. 5. S. 3.) That in Shakspeare's time the negative in common speech was used to design, ironically, the excess of a thing ; and this assertion is fully confirmed by the several examples produced by Mr. Steevens in proof of it. The following might be added to those already given. A. 5. S. 1.

" *Here's no abuse to the common wealth.*"

Ben Jonson's every man in his humour. A. 4. S. 7.

" *O here's no foppery !*"

Messenger's City Madam. A. 1. S. 1.

" *Here's no gross flattery.*"

Middleton's Chast Mayd of Cheapside. P. 30.

" *Here's no unconscionable villainy !*"

Enter

133 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Enter Barber.

Now, fir, are you the barber?

Barber.

Oh most barbarous !
A corrector of enormities in hair, my lord,
A promoter of upper lips, or what your lordship,
In the neatness of your discretion, shall think fit
To call me.

Hengist.

Very good, I see you have this without book ;
But what's your business ?

Barber.

Your lordship comes to a very high point indeed,
The-business, fir, lies about the head.

Hengist.

That's work for you.

Barber.

No, my good lord, there is a corporation,
A body, a kind of body.

Hengist.

The barber is out at the body, let in the taylor ;
This 'tis to reach beyond your own profession ;
When you let go your head, you lose your memory ;
You have no business with the body.

Barber.

Yes, fir,
I am a barber-chirurgeon, I have had
Something to do with it in my time, my lord,
And I was never so out of the body
As I have been of late : send me good luck,
I'll marry some whore but I'll get in again.

Enter Taylor.

Hengist.

Now, fir, a good discovery come from you.

Taylor.

I will rip up the linings to your lordship,
And shew what stuff 'tis made of ; for the body
Or corporation—

Hengist.

Hengist.

There the barber left indeed.

Taylor.

'Tis piec'd up of two fashions.

Hengist.

A patch'd town the whilest.

Taylor.

Nor can we go through stitch, my noble lord,
The choler is so great in the one party.

And as in linsy-woolsey wove together,
One piece makes several suits, so, upright earl,
Our linsy-woolsey hearts make all this coil.

Hengist.

What's all this now ? I am ne'er the wiser yet,

Enter Glover.

Call in the rest. Now, fir, what are you ?

Glover.

Sir, reverence on your lordship,
I am a glover.

Hengist.

What needs that then ?

Glover.

Sometimes I deal in dog's leather, fir, reverence the
while.

Hengist.

Well, to the purpose, if there be any towards.

Glover.

I were an afs else, saving your lordship's prefence ;
We have a body, but our town wants a hand,
A hand of justice, a worshipful master mayor.

Hengist.

This is well handled yet, a man may take
Some hold on it. You want a mayor ?

Glover.

Right, but there's two at fifty-cuffs about it,
Sir, as I may say at daggers drawing,
But that I cannot say, because they have none ;
And you being earl of Kent, our town does say,
Your lordship's voice shall part and end the fray.

VOL. XI.

K

Hengist.

136 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Hengist.

This is strange work for me—Well, fir, what be they?

Glover.

The one is a tanner.

Hengist.

Fie, I shall be too partial,
I owe too much affection to that trade
To put it to my voice—What is his name?

Glover.

Simon.

Hengist.

How, Simon too?

Glover.

Nay, 'tis but Simon one, fir,
The very same Simon that sold your lordship a hide.

Hengist.

What sayest thou?

Glover.

That's all his glory, fir, he got his master's
Widow by it presently, a rich tanner's wife,
She has set him up; he was her fore-man
A long time in her other husband's days.

Hengist.

Now let me perish in my first aspiring,
If the pretty simplicity of his fortune
Do not most highly take me; 'tis a presage, methinks,
Of bright succeeding happiness to mine,
When my fate's glow-worm casts forth such a shine.
And what are those that do contend with him?

Taylor.

Marry, my noble lord, a fustian-weaver.

Hengist.

How! he offer
To compare with Simon! he a fit match for him!

Barber.

Hark, hark, my lord, here they come both
In a pelting chafe from the town-house.

Enter

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 131

Enter Simon and Oliver.

Simon.

How, before me? I scorn thee,
Thou wattle-fac'd findg'd pig.

Oliver.

Pig? I defy thee,
My uncle was a Jew, and scorn'd the motion ¹².

Simon.

I list not brook thy vaunts, compare with me?
Thou spindle of concupiscence, 'tis well known
Thy first wife was a flax-wench.

Oliver.

But such a flax-wench would I might never want.
At my need, nor any friend of mine:
My neighbours knew her, thy wife was but
An hempen halter to her.

Simon.

Use better words,
I'll hang thee in my year else,
Let who will chuse thee afterwards.

Glover.

Peace, for shame,
Quench your spirit, do not you see his lordship?

Hengist.

What, master Simonides?

Simon.

Simonides?
What a fair name hath he made of Simon!
Then he's an ass that calls me Simon again,
I am quite out of love with it.

Hengist.

Give me thy hand,
I love thy fortunes, and like a man that thrives.

Simon.

I took a widow, my lord,
To be the best piece of ground to thrive on,

¹² *Motion.*] Or more likely *the mention*, that is, *the very name of a Pig.*

132 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

And by my faith, my lord, there's a young Simonides,
Like a green onion, peeping up already.

Hengist.

Th'haft a good lucky hand.

Simon.

I have somewhat, fir.

Hengist.

But why to me is this election offer'd?
The chusing of a mayor goes by most voices.

Simon.

True, fir, but most of our townsmen are so hoarse
With drinking, there's not a good voice among them all.

Hengist.

Are you content to put it to all these then?
To whom I liberally resign my interest,
To prevent censures.

Simon.

I speak first, my lord.

Oliver.

Though I speak last, my lord, I am not least;
If they will cast away a town-born child,
They may, it is but dying some forty years
Before my time.

Hengist.

I leave you to your choice a while.

[*Exit.*

All.

Your good lordship.

Simon.

Look you, neighbours, before you be too hasty,
Let Oliver the fustian-weaver stand
As fair as I do, and the devil do him good on't.

Oliver.

I do, thou upstart callymoocher, I do;
'Tis well known to the parish I have been
Twice alecunner; thou mushroom, thou shot'st up
In a night, by lying with thy mistress.

Simon.

Faith, thou art such a spiny baldrib,
All the mistresses in the town will never get thee up.

Oliver.

Oliver.

I scorn to rise by a woman as thou didst,
My wife shall rise by me.

Glover.

I pray leave your communication,
We can do nothing else.

Oliver.

I gave that barber a fustian-suit¹³,
And twice redeem'd his cittern : he may remember me.

Simon.

I fear no false measure but in that taylor ;
The glover and button-maker are both cock-sure ;
That collier's eye I like not :
Now they consult, the matter is in brewing.
Poor Gill, my wife, lies longing for the news,
'Twill make her a glad mother.

All.

A Simon, a Simon.

Simon.

Good people, I thank you all.

Oliver.

Wretch that I am !
Tanner, thou hast curried favour.

¹³ *I gave that barber a fustian suit,
And twice redeem'd his cittern : he may remember me.]*

A Lute or Cittern formerly used to be part of the furniture of a barber's shop, and, as *Sir John Hawkins* in his notes on *Walton's Complete Angler*, P. 236, observes, answered the end of a newspaper, the now common amusement of waiting customers. In an old book of Enigmas, to every one of which the author has prefixed a wooden cut of the subject of the Enigma, is a barber, and the cut represents a barber's shop, in which there is one person sitting in a chair, under the barber's hands, while another, who is waiting for his turn, is playing on the Lute ; and on the side of the shop hangs another instrument, of the Lute or Cittern kind. This custom will explain the following passage in *Ben Jonson's Silent Woman*. A. 3. B. 5. where *Morose* cries out, " That curst barber ! — I have married his Cittern, that is common to all men ; again, *Lord Falkland's Marriage Night*. A. 1. S. 1. vol. 12.

" — He has travel'd and speaks languages,

" *As a barber's boy plays o' th' gittern.*"

Simon.

I curry ! I defy thy fustian fume.

Oliver.

But I will prove a rebel all thy year,
And raise up the seven deadly sins against thee. [Exit.

Simon.

The deadly sins will scorn to rise by thee,
If they have any breeding, as commonly
They are well brought up, 'tis not for every scab
To be acquainted with them ; but leaving the scab,
To you, good neighbours, now I bend my speech.
First, to say more than a man can say,
I hold it not fit to be spoken ; but to say
What a man ought to say, there I leave you also.
I must confess your loves have chosen a weak and un-
learned man ;
That I can neither write nor read, you all can witness ;
Yet not altogether so unlearned, but I can set my mark
to a bond,
If I would be so simple ; an excellent token of government.
Cheer you then, my hearts, you have done you know not
what ;
There's a full point. There you must all cough and hem.

[Here they all cough and hem.]

Now touching our common adversary the fustian-weaver,
Who threatens he will raise the deadly sins among us,
Let them come, our town is big enough to hold them,
We will not so much disgrace it ; besides, you know,
A deadly sin will lie in a narrow hole ;
But when they think themselves safest, and the web
Of their iniquity best woven, with the horse-strength of
my justice
I will break through the look of their concupiscence,
And make the weaver go seek his shuttle.
Here you may cough and hem again,
If you'll do me the favour. *[They cough and hem again.]*
Why, I thank you all, and it shall not go unrewarded.
Now for the deadly sins, pride, sloth, envy, wrath ;
As for covetousness and gluttony, I'll tell you

More of that when I come out of my office ;
 I shall have time to try what they are ;
 I will prove them soundly : and if I find gluttony
 And covetousness to be directly sins,
 I'll bury the one in the bottom of a chest,
 And the other in the end of my garden.
 But, sirs, for leachery, I'll tickle that home myself,
 I'll not leave a whore in the town.

Barber.

Some of your neighbours must seek their
 Wives in the country then.

Simon.

Barber, be silent,
 I will cut thy comb else. To conclude,
 I will learn the villainy of all trades ;
 My own I know already ; if there be any knavery
 In the baker, I will bolt it out ; if in the brewer,
 I will taste him thoroughly,
 And piss out his iniquity at his own suckhole :
 In a word, I will knock down all enormities
 Like a butcher, and fend the hide
 To my fellow tanners.

All.

A Simonides, a true Simonides indeed.

Enter Hengist and Roxena.

Hengist.

How now, how goes your choice ?

Taylor.

This is he, my lord.

Simon.

To prove I am the man, I am bold to take
 The upper hand of your lordship :
 I'll not lose an inch of my honour.

Hengist.

Hold, sirs, there's some few crowns
 To mend your feast, because I like your choice.

Barber.

Joy bless you, sir !
 We'll drink your health with trumpets.

K 4

Simon.

Simon.

Ay, with sack-buts,
That's the more solemn drinking for my state.
No malt this year shall fume into my pate. [*Exit cum suis.*]

Hengist.

Continues still that favour in his love?

Roxana.

Nay, with increase, my lord, the flame grows greater,
Though he has learn'd a better art of late
To set a skreen before it.

Enter Vortiger and Horsus.

Hengist.

Speak lower.

Horsus.

Heard every word, my lord.

Vortiger.

Plainly?

Horsus.

Distinctly;
The course I took was dangerous, but not failing,
For I convey'd myself behind the hangings
Even just before his entrance.

Vortiger.

'Twas well ventur'd.

Horsus.

I had such a woman's first and second longing
In me to hear her, how she'd bear her mock'd abuse
After she was return'd to privacy,
I could have fasted out an ember-week,
And never thought of hunger, to have heard her;
Then came your holy Lupus and Germanus.

Vortiger.

Two holy confessors.

Horsus.

At whose first sight
I could perceive her fall upon her breast,
And cruelly afflict herself with sorrow;
I never heard a sigh till I heard hers,
Who after her confession, pitying her,
Put her into a way of patience,

Which

Which now she holds, to keep it hid from you,
There's all the pleasure that I took in't now,
When I heard that, my pains was well remembred.
So with applying comforts and relief,
They have brought it lower, to an easy grief;
But yet the taste is not quite gone.

Vortiger.

Still fortune
Sits bettering our inventions.

Enter Castiza.

Horsus.

Here she comes.

Castiza.

Yonder's my lord; oh! I'll return again,
Methinks I should not dare to look on him.

Horsus.

She's gone again.

Vortiger.

It works the kindlier, sir.
Go now and call her back, she winds herself
Into the snare so prettily, 'tis a pleasure
To set toils for her.

Castiza.

He may read my shame
Now in my blush.

[*Aside.*]

Vortiger.

Come, y'are so link'd to holiness,
So taken with contemplative desires,
That the world has you, yet enjoys you not;
You have been weeping too.

Castiza.

Not I, my lord.

Vortiger.

Trust me, I fear you have; y'are much to blame
To yield so much to passion without cause.
Is not some time enough for meditation?
Must it lay title to your health and beauty,
And draw them into time's consumption too?
'Tis too exacting for a holy faculty.
My lord of Kent!—I pr'ythee wake him, captain,

He

138 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

He reads himself asleep, sure.

Horfus.

My lord !

Vortiger.

Nay,
I'll take away your book and bestow't here.

Hengist.

Your pardon, sir.

Vortiger.

Lady, you that delight in virgins stories,
And all chaste works, here's excellent reading for you ;
Make of that book as made men do of favours,
Which they grow sick to part from. And now, my lord,
You that have so conceitedly gone beyond me,
And made so large use of a slender gift
Which we ne'er minded ; I commend your thrift.
And that your building may to all ages
Carry the stamp and impress of your wit,
It shall be call'd Thong-Castle¹³.

Hengist.

How, my lord,
Thong-Castle ! there your grace quits me kindly.

Vortiger.

'Tis fit art should be known by its right name ;
You that can spread my gift, I'll spread your fame.

Hengist.

I thank your grace for that.

Vortiger.

And, loved lord,
So well we do accept your invitation,
With all speed we'll set forwards.

Hengist.

Your honour loves me.

[*Exeunt.*]

¹³ *Thong-Castle.*] See Lambarde's Perambulation of Kent 1596, p. 195.
Jeffrey of Monmouth's British History, B. 6. C. 11.

A C T

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter Simon and all his brethren, a mace and sword before him, meeting Vortiger, Castiza, Hengist, Roxena, Hersus, two ladies.

Simon.

LO I, the mayor of Quinborough by name,
 With all my brethren, saving one that's lame,
 Are come as fast as fiery mill-horse gallops
 To greet thy grace, thy queen, and her fair trollops.
 For reason of our coming do not look,
 It must be done, I find it i'th' town-book ;
 And yet not I myself, I cannot read,
 I keep a clerk to do those jobs for need.
 And now expect a rare conceit before Thong-Castle, see
 thee ;
 Reach me the thing to give the king, the other too I pr'y-
 thee :
 Now here they be, for queen and thee, the gift all steel
 and leather :
 But the conceit of mickle weight, and here they come to-
 gether :
 To shew two loves must join in one, our town presents by
 me
 This gilded scabbard to the queen, this dagger unto thee.

Vortiger.

Forbear your tedious and ridiculous duties ;
 I hate them, as I do the riots of your
 Inconstant rabble ; I have felt your fits,
 Sheath up your bounties with your iron wits.

[Exit cum sociis.]

Simon.

Look, sirs, is his back turn'd ?

All.

It is, it is.

Simon.

Simon.

Then blefs the good Earl of Kent, fay I,
 I'll have this dagger turn'd into a pye,
 And eaten up for anger, every bit on't.
 And when this pye shall be cut up by some rare cunning
 Pye-man,
 They shall full lamentably fing, Put up thy dagger, Simon.
[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II.

*Enter Hengift, Horfus, Vortiger, Devonshire, Stafford,
 Castiza, Roxena, ladies.*

Hengift.

A Welcome, mighty lord, may appear costlier,
 More full of toil and talk, shew and conceit,
 But one more stor'd with thankful love and truth
 I forbid all the sons of men to boast of.

Vortiger.

Why here's a fabric that implies eternity,
 The building plain, but most substantial;
 Methinks it looks as if it mock'd all ruin,
 Saving that master-piece of consummation,
 The end of time, which must consume even ruin,
 And eat that into cinders.

Hengift.

There's no brass
 Would pass your praise, my lord; 'twould last beyond it,
 And shame our durablest metal.

Vortiger.

Horsus!

Horsus.

My lord!

Vortiger.

This is the time I have chosen; here's a full meeting,
 And here I will disgrace her.

Horsus.

Horfus.

'Twill be sharp, my lord.

Vortiger.

Oh, 'twill be best.

Horfus.

Why, here's the earl her father.

Vortiger.

Ay, and the lord her uncle, that's the height of it,
Invited both on purpose, to rise sick
Full of shame's surfeit.

Horfus.

And that's shrewd, by'r lady,
It ever sticks close to the ribs of honour;
Great men are never sound men after it,
It leaves some ach or other in their names still,
Which their posterity feels at every weather.

Vortiger.

Mark but the least presentment of occasion,
As these times yield enough, and then mark me.

Horfus.

My observance is all yours, you know't, my lord—
What careful ways some take to abuse themselves!
But as there be assurers of mens goods
'Gainst storms or pirates, which gives adventurers courage,
So such there must be to make up man's theft,
Or there would be no woman-venturer left.
See, now they find their seats! what a false knot
Of amity he ties about her arm,
Which rage must part! In marriage 'tis no wonder,
Knots knit with kisses oft are broke with thunder.
Music! then I have done, I always learn
To give my betters place.

[*Aside.*]

Vortiger.

Where's captain Horfus?
Sit, sit, we'll have a health anon to all good services.

Horfus.

They are poor in these days, th'had rather have
The carp than the health; he hears me not,
And most great men are deaf on that side.

Vortiger.

Vortiger.

My lord of Kent, I thank you for this welcome,
It came unthought of in the sweetest language
That ever my soul relish'd.

Hengist.

You are pleas'd, my lord,
To raise my happiness for slight deservings
To shew what power's in princes; not in us
Aught worthy, 'tis in you that makes us thus.
I am chiefly sad, my lord, your queen's not merry.

Vortiger.

So honour blefs me, he has found the way
To my grief strangely. Is there no delight —

Castiza.

My lord, I wish not any, nor is't needful,
I am as I was ever.

Vortiger.

That's not so.

Castiza.

How? oh my fears!

*[Aside.]**Vortiger.*

When she writ maid, my lord,
You knew her otherwise.

Devonshire.

To speak but truth,
I never knew her a great friend to mirth,
Nor taken much with any one delight,
Though there be many seemly and honourable
To give content to ladies without taxing.

Vortiger.

My lord of Kent, this to thy full deserts,
Which intimates thy higher flow to honour.

Hengist.

Which like a river, shall return in service
To the great master-fountain.

Vortiger.

Where's your lord?
I miss'd him not 'till now; lady, and yours?
No marvel then we were so out of the way

Of

Of all pleasant discourse; they are the keys
Of human music; sure at their nativities
Great nature sign'd a general patent to them
To take up all the mirth in a whole kingdom.
What's their employment now?

First Lady.

May it please your grace,
We never are so far acquainted with them;
Nothing we know but what they cannot keep,
That's even the fashion of them all, my lord.

Vortiger.

It seems y' have great thought in their constancies,
And they in yours, you dare so trust each other.

Second Lady.

Hope well we do, my lord, we have reason for it,
Because they say brown men are honestest,
But she's a fool will swear for any colour.

Vortiger.

They would for yours.

Second Lady.

Troth 'tis a doubtful question,
And I'd be loth to put mine to't, my lord.

Vortiger.

Faith, dare you swear for yourselves? that's a plain
question.

Second Lady.

My lord?

Vortiger.

You cannot deny that with honour,
And since 'tis urg'd, I'll put you to't in troth.

First Lady.

May it please your grace —

Vortiger.

'Twould please me very well,
And here's a book, mine never goes without one,
She's an example to you all for purity;
Come, swear (I have sworn you shall) that you ne'er knew
The will of any man, besides your husband's.

Second Lady.

I'll swear, my lord, as far as my remembrance.

Vortiger.

244 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Vortiger.

How! your remembrance? that were strange.

First Lord.

Your grace

Hearing our just excuse, will not say so.

Vortiger.

Well, what's your just excuse? Y'are never without some.

First Lady.

I am often taken with a sleep, my lord :
The loudest thunder cannot waken me ;
Not if a cannon's burden be discharg'd
Close by my ear. The more may be my wrong.
There can be no infirmity, my lord,
More excusable in any woman.

Second Lady.

And I am so troubled with the mother too,
I have often call'd in help, I know not whom.
Three at once have been too weak to keep me down.

Vortiger.

I perceive, there's no fastening—Well, fair one then,
That never deceives faith's anchor of her hold,
Come at all seasons. Here, be thou the star
To guide those erring women, shew the way
Which I will make them follow—Why do'st start,
Draw back, and look so pale?

Castiza.

My lord !

Vortiger.

Come hither ;
Nothing but take that oath : thou'lt take a thousand,
A thousand ! nay a million, or as many
As there be angels registers of oaths.
Why look thee, over-fearful chastity,
(That sin'st in nothing but in too much niceness)
I'll begin first and swear for thee myself.
I know thee a perfection so unstain'd,
So sure, so absolute ; I will not pant on it,
But catch time greedily—By all those blessings
That blow truth into fruitfulness, and those curses

That

That with their barren breaths blast perjury,
Thou art as pure as sanctity's best shrine
From all man's mixture, save what's lawful, mine.

Castiza.

Oh Heaven forgive him, he has forsworn himself!

[*Aside.*

Vortiger.

Come, 'tis but going now my way.

Castiza.

That's bad enough.

[*Aside.*

Vortiger.

I have clear'd all doubts, you see.

Castiza.

Good, my lord, spare me.

Vortiger.

How! it grows later than so. For modesty's sake,
Make more speed this way.

Castiza.

Pardon me, my lord,
I cannot.

Vortiger.

What?

Castiza.

I dare not.

Vortiger.

Fail all confidence in thy weak kind for ever.

Devonshire.

Here's a storm.

Able to make all of our name inhumid,
And raise them from their sleeps of peace and fame,
To set the honours of their bloods right, here,
Hundred years after. A perpetual motion
Has their true glory been from seed to seed,
And cannot be choak'd now with a poor grain
Of dust and earth. Her uncle and myself,
Wild in this tempest, as ever robb'd man's peace,
Will undertake, upon life's deprivation,
She shall accept this oath.

Vortiger.

You do but call me then

146 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Into a world of more despair and horror :
Yet since so wilfully you stand engag'd
In high scorn to be touch'd ; with expedition
Perfect your undertakings with your fames,
Or, by the issues of abus'd belief,
I'll take the forfeit of lives, lands, and honours,
And make one ruin serve our joys and yours.

Castina.

Why, here's a height of miseries never reach'd yet ;
I lose myself and others.

Devonshire.

You may see
How much we lay in balance with your goodness,
And had we more, it went ; for we presume
You cannot be religious and so vile.

Castina.

As to forswear myself—'tis truth, great sir,
The honour of your bed hath been abus'd.

Vortiger.

Oh, beyond patience !

Castina.

But give me hearing, sir :
'Twas far from my consent ; I was surpriz'd
By villanies, and so raught.

Vortiger.

Hear you that, sirs ?
Oh cunning texture to inclose adultery !
Mark but what subtle vail her sins put on.
Religion brings her to confession first,
Then steps in art to sanctify that lust.
'Tis likely you could be surpriz'd.

Castina.

My lord !

Vortiger.

I'll hear no more—our guard seize on these lords.

Devonshire.

We cannot perish now too fast : make speed
To swift destruction. He breathes most accurst
That lives so long to see his name die first.

Horfus.

Here's no dear villainy !

[*Aside.*]

Hengist.

Let him intreat, fir,
That falls in saddest grief for this event,
Which ill begins the fortune of this building—my lord !

Roxena.

What if he should cause me to swear too, captain ?
You know I am as far to seek in honesty
As the worst can be. I should be sham'd too.

Horfus.

Why, fool, they swear by that we worship not ;
So you may swear your heart out, and ne'er hurt yourself.

Roxena.

That was well thought on : I had quite lost myself else.

Vortiger.

You shall prevail in noble suits, my lord ;
But this does shame the speaker.

Horfus.

I'll step in now,
Though it shall be to no purpose—Good, my lord,
Think on your noble and most hopeful issue
Lord Vortimer, the prince.

Vortiger.

A bastard, fir :
I would his life were in my fury now.

Castiza.

That injury stirs my soul to speak the truth
Of his conception—Here, I take the book, my lord ;
By all the glorify'd rewards of virtue
And prepar'd punishments for consents in sin,
A queen's hard sorrow ne'er supply'd a kingdom
With issue more legitimate than Vortimer.

Vortiger.

This takes not out the stain of present shame :
Continuance crowns desert. She ne'er can go
For perfect honest that's not always so—
Beshrew thy heart for urging this excuse.
Th' hast justify'd her somewhat.

L 2

Horfus.

Horfus.

To small purpose.

Vortiger.

Among so many women, not one here
Dare swear a simple chastity ! Here's an age
To propagate virtue in. Since I have begun,
I'll shame you all together, and so leave you.
My lord of Kent !

Hengist.

Your highness ?

Vortiger.

That's your daughter ?

Hengist.

Yes, my good lord.

Vortiger.

Though I am your guest to-day,
And should be less austere to you or yours,
In this case pardon me : I may not spare her.

Hengist.

Then her own goodness friend her—she comes, my lord.

Vortiger.

The tender reputation of a maid
Makes your honour, or else nothing can :
The oath you take is not for truth to man,
But to your own white soul ; a mighty task !
What dare you do in this ?

Roxana.

My lord, as much
As chastity can put a woman to,
I ask no favour. And t'approve the purity
Of what my habit and my time professeth,
As likewise to requite all courteous censure,
Here I take oath I am as free from man
As truth from falsehood, or sanctity from stain.

Vortiger.

Oh thou treasure that ravishes the possessor !
I know not where to speed so well again.
I'll keep thee while I have thee. Here's a fountain
To spring forth princes, and the seeds of kingdoms.
Away with that infection of black honour,

And

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 149

And those her leprous pledges.—
Here will we store succession with true peace;
And of pure virgins grace the poor increase.

[*Exeunt all but Horsus.*]

Horsus.

Ha, ha, he's well provided now: here struck my fortunes.

With what an impudent confidence she swore honest,
Having th' advantage of the oath! Precious whore!
Methinks I should not hear from fortune next
Under an earldom now. She cannot spend
A night so idly, but to make a lord
With ease methinks, and play.—The earl of Kent
Is calm and smooth, like a deep dangerous water.
He has some secret way; I know his blood;
The grave's not greedier, nor hell's lord more proud.
Something will hap; for this astonishing choice
Strikes pale the kingdom, at which I rejoice.

[*Exit.*]

Dumb show. *Enter Lupus, Germanus, Devonshire, and Stafford, leading Vortimer, and crown him: Vortiger comes to them in passion: they neglect him. Enter Roxena in fury, expressing discontent; then they lead out Vortimer. Roxena gives two villains gold to murder him: they swear performance, and go with her. Vortiger offers to run on his sword; Horsus prevents him, and persuades him. The lords bring in Vortimer dead: Vortiger mourns, and submits to them: they swear him, and crown him. Then enters Hengist with Saxons: Vortiger draws, threatens expulsion, and then sends a parley; which Hengist seems to grant by laying down his weapons; so all depart severally.*

Enter Raynulpbus.

Raynulpbus.

Of Pagan blood a queen being chose,
Roxena hight, the Britains rose
For Vortimer, and crown'd him king:
But she soon poison'd that sweet spring.
Then unto rule they did restore

L 3

Vortiger

150 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Vortiger; and him they swore
Against the Saxons. They (constrain'd)
Begg'd peace, treaty, and obtain'd.
And now in numbers equally
Upon the plain near Sal'sbury,
A peaceful meeting they decree,
Like men of love, no weapon seen:
But Hengist, that ambitious lord,
Full of guile, corrupts his word,
As the sequel too well proves:—
On that your eyes; on us your loves.

[Exit,

Enter Hengist, with Saxons.

Hengist.

If we let slip this opportuneful hour,
Take leave of fortune, certainty, or thought
Of ever fixing: we are loose at root,
And the least storm may rend us from the bosom
Of this land's hopes for ever. But, dear Saxons,
Fasten we now, and our unshaken firmness
Will endure after-ages.

Saxons.

We are resolv'd, my lord.

Hengist.

Observe you not how Vortiger the king,
Base in submission, threatened our expulsion,
His arm held up against us? Is it not time
To make our best prevention? What should check me?
He has perfected that great work in our daughter,
And made her queen. She can ascend no higher,
Therefore be quick; dispatch. Here, every man
Receive into the service of his vengeance
An instrument of steel, which will unseen
Lurk, like a snake under the innocent shade
Of a spread summer-leaf, there fly you on.
Take heart, the commons love us; those remov'd
That are the nerves, our greatness stands improv'd.

Saxon.

Give us the word, my lord, and we are perfect.

Hengist.

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 151

Hengist.

That's true, the word, I lose myself—
*Nemp your sexes*¹⁴: it shall be that.

Saxon.

Enough, fir: then we strike.

Hengist.

But the king's mine: take heed you touch him not.

Saxon.

We shall not be at leisure: never fear it,
We shall have work enough of our own, my lord.

Hengist.

Calma looks, but stormy souls possess you all.

Enter Vortiger and British lords.

Vortiger.

We see you keep your words in all points firm.

Hengist.

No longer may we boast of so much breath
As goes to a word's making, than of care
In the preserving of it when 'tis made.

Vortiger.

Y'are in a virtuous way, my lord of Kent:
And since both sides are met, like sons of peace;
All other arms laid by in signs of favour,
If our conditions be embraced—

Hengist.

They are,

¹⁴ *Nemp your sexes.*] "The appointment being agreed to on both sides, Hengist, with a new design of villainy in his head, ordered his soldiers to carry, every one of them, a long dagger under their garments; and while the conference should be held with the Britons, who would have no suspicion of them, he would give them this word of command, *Nemet oure Saxas*; at which moment they were all to be ready to seize boldly every one his next man, and with his drawn dagger stab him. Accordingly, at the time and place appointed, they all met, and began to treat of peace; and when a fit opportunity for executing his villainy served, Hengist cried out *Nemet oure Saxas*; and the same instant seized Vortegirn, and held him by his cloak." Jeffrey of Monmouth's *British History*, translated by Aaron Thompson. 1718. 8vo. p. 194.

15 ~~SCENE~~ MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Vortiger.

We'll use no other but these only here.

Hengist.

Nemp your sexes.

British Lords.

Treason! treason!

Hengist.

Follow it to the heart, my trusty Saxons;
It is your liberty, your wealth, and honour.
Soft, you are mine, my lord.

Vortiger.

Take me not basely, when all sense and strength
Lie bound up in amazement at this treachery.
What devil hath breath'd this everlasting part
Of falshood into thee?

Hengist.

Let it suffice

I have you, and will hold you prisoner
As fast as death holds your best props in silence,
We know the hard conditions of our peace,
Slavery or diminution; which we hate
With a joint loathing. May all perish thus,
That seek to subjugate or lessen us!

Vortiger.

Oh, the strange nooks of guile and subtilty,
When man so cunningly lies hid from man!
Who could expect such treason from thy breast?
Such thunder from thy voice? Or tak'st thou pride
To imitate the fair uncertainty
Of a bright day, that teems a sudden storm,
When the world least expects one? but of all,
I'll ne'er trust fair sky in a man again:
There's the deceitful weather. Will you heap
More guilt upon you by detaining me,
Like a cup taken after a sore surfeit,
Even in contempt of health and heaven together?
What seek you?

Hengist.

Ransom for your liberty,
As I shall like of, or you ne'er obtain it.

Vortiger.

Vortiger.

Here's a most headlong dangerous ambition.
Sow you the seeds of your aspiring hopes
In blood and treason, and must I pay for them?

Hengist.

Have not I rais'd you to this height of pride?
A work of my own merit, since you enforce it.

Vortiger.

There's even the general thanks of all aspirers:
When they have all a kingdom can impart,
They write above it still their own desert.

Hengist.

I have writ mine true, my lord.

Vortiger.

That's all their sayings.
Have not I rais'd thy daughter to a queen?

Hengist.

You have the harmony of your pleasure for it;
You crown your own desires. What's that to me?

Vortiger.

And what will crown yours, sir?

Hengist.

Faith, things of reason:
I demand Kent.

Vortiger.

Why, y'have the earldom of it.

Hengist.

The kingdom of't, I mean, without controul,
In full possession.

Vortiger.

This is strange in you!

Hengist.

It seems y'are not acquainted with my blood,
To call this strange.

Vortiger.

Never was king of Kent,
But who was general king.

Hengist.

I'll be the first then;
Every thing has beginning.

Vortiger.

No less title?

Hengist.

154 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Hengist.

Not if you hope for liberty, my lord.
So dear a happiness would not be wrong'd with fighting,

Vortiger.

Very well ; take it, I resign it,

Hengist.

Why I thank your grace.

Vortiger.

Is your great thirst yet satisfied ?

Hengist.

Faith, my lord,
There's yet behind a pair of teeming sisters,
Norfolk and Suffolk, and I have done with you,

Vortiger.

Y'have got a dangerous thirst of late, my lord,
Howe'er you came by it.

Hengist.

It behoves me then
For my blood's health, to seek all means to quench it,

Vortiger.

Them too ?

Hengist.

There will be nothing abated, I assure you.

Vortiger.

You have me at advantage. He whom fate
Does captivate, must yield to all. Take them.

Hengist.

And you your liberty and peace, my lord,
With our best love and wishes.—Here's an hour
Begins us Saxons in wealth, fame, and power.

Vortiger.

[*Exit cum suis.*]

Are these the noblest fruits and fairest requitals
From works of our own raising ?
Methinks¹⁵ the murder of Constantius
Speaks to me in the voice of it, and the wrongs

¹⁵ *Methinks*, &c.] Shakspeare seems to have imitated this in the
Tempest, A. 3. S. 3.

"O, it is monstrous ! monstrous !

"Methought, the billows spoke, and told me of it ;

"The winds did sing it to me ; and the thunder,

"That deep and dreadful organ-pipe, pronounc'd

"The name of Prosper."

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 155

Of our late queen, slipp'd both into one organ.

Enter Horsus.

Ambition, hell, my own undoing lust,
And all the brood of plagues conspire against me;
I have not a friend left me.

Horsus.

My lord, he dies

That says it, but yourself, were't that thief-king,
That has so boldly stol'n his honours from you,
A treason that wrings tears from honest manhood.

Vortiger.

So rich am I now in thy love and pity,
I feel no loss at all; but we must part,
My queen and I to Cambria.

Horsus.

My lord, and I not named,
That have vow'd lasting service to my life's
Extremest minute?

Vortiger.

Is my sick fate blest with so pure a friend?

Horsus.

My lord, no space of earth, nor breadth of sea
Shall divide me from you.

Vortiger.

O faithful treasure!

All my lost happiness is made up in thee.

[*Exit.*]

Horsus.

I'll follow you through the world, to cuckold you;
That's my way now. Every one has his toy

While he lives here; some men delight in building,

A trick of Babel, which will ne'er be left;

Some in consuming what was rais'd with toiling;

Hengist in getting honour, I in spoiling.

[*Exit.*]

A C T

156 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

A C T V. S C E N E I.

Enter Simon and his brethren, Aminadab his clerk.

Simon.

IS not that rebel Oliver, that traitor to my year,
Prehended yet ?

Aminadab.

Not yet, so please your worship.

Simon.

Not yet, say'st thou ? how durst thou say,
Not yet, and see me present ? thou malapert,
That art good for nothing but to write and read,
Is his loom seiz'd upon ?

Aminadab.

Yes, if it like your worship,
And sixteen yards of fustian.

Simon.

Good :

Let a yard be sav'd to mend me between the legs,
The rest cut in pieces, and given to the poor.
'Tis heretick fustian, and should be burnt indeed,
But being worn thread-bare, the shame will be
As great ; how think you, neighbours ?

Glover.

Greater, methinks, the longer it is wore ;
When being once burnt, it can be burnt no more.

Simon.

True, wife, and most senseless. How now, firrah,

Enter a footman.

What's he approaching here in dusty pumps ?

Aminadab.

A footman, fir, to the great king of Kent.

Simon.

The king of Kent ? shake him by the hand for me.
Th'art welcome, footman ; lo, my deputy shakes thee ;
Come when my year is out, I'll do't my self.
If 'twere a dog that came from the king of Kent,
I keep those officers would shake him ; I trow.
And what's the news with thee, thou well-stew'd footman ?

Footman.

The king, my master—

Simon.

Ha ?

Footman.

With a few Saxons,
Intends this night to make merry with you.

Simon.

Merry with me ? I should be sorry else, fellow,
And take it in ill part, so tell Kent's king.
Why was I chosen, but that great men should make
Merry with me ? there is a jest indeed ;
Tell him I look'd for't, and me much he wrongs,
If he forget Sim that cut out his thongs.

Footman.

I'll run with your worship's answer.

[*Exit.*

Simon.

Do, I pr'ythee.

That fellow will be roasted against supper,
He's half enough already, his brows baste him.
The king of Kent ! the king of Kirfendom
Shall not be better welcome ;
For you must imagine now, neighbours,
This is the time when Kent stands out of Kirfendom,
For he that's king here now was never kirsen'd.
This for your more instruction I thought fit,
That when you are dead you may teach your children wit.
Clerk !

Aminadab.

At your worship's elbow.

Simon.

I must turn you
From the hall to the kitchen to-night.
Give order that twelve pigs be roasted yellow ;
Nine geese, and some three larks for piddling meat ;
And twenty woodcocks ; I'll bid all my neighbours.
Give charge the mutton come in all blood-raw,
That is infidels meat : the king of Kent is a pagan,
And must be serv'd so. And let those officers that seldom
Or never go to church, bring it in,
'Twill be the better taken. Run, run ; come you hither
Now,

158 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Now, take all my cushions down and thwack them
Soundly, after my feast of millers ; for their buttocks
Have left a peck of flour in them ; beat them carefully
Over a bolting-hutch, there will be enough
For a pan-pudding, as your dame will handle it.
Then put fresh water into both the bough-pots,
And burn a little juniper in the hall-chimney.
Like a beast as I was, I piss'd out the fire
Last night, and never dreamt of the king's coming.
How now, return'd so quickly ?

Aminadab.

Please your worship, here are
A certain company of players.

Simon.

Ha, players !

Aminadab.

Country comedians, interluders, fir,
Desire your worship's favour and leave
To enact in the town-hall.

Simon.

In the town-hall ?
'Tis ten to one I never grant them that ;
Call them before my worship.

Enter Cheaters.

If my house will not serve their turn, I would
Fain see the proudest he lend them a barn.
Now, firs, are you comedians ?

Second Cheater.

We are, fir, comedians, tragedians,
Tragi-comedians, comi-tragedians, pastorists,
Humorists, clownists, satirists ; we have them, fir,
From the hug to the smile, from the smile to the laugh,
From the laugh to the handkerchief.

Simon.

You're very strong in the wrist, methinks ;
And must all these good parts be cast away
Upon pedlers, and maltmen, ha ?

First Cheater.

For want of better company, if it please your worship.

Simon.

What think you of me, my masters ?
Hum ; have you audacity enough

To

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 139

To play before so high a person as my self?
Will not my countenance daunt you? for if
You play before me, I shall often look on you,
I give you that warning before hand:
Take it not ill, my masters, I shall laugh at you,
And truly when I am least offended with you;
It is my humour, but be not you abash'd.

First Cheater.

Sir, we have play'd before a lord ere now,
Though we be country actors.

Simon.

A lord? ha, ha,
Thou'lt find it a harder thing to please a Mayor;

Second Cheater.

We have a play wherein we use a horse.

Simon.

Fellows, you use no horse-play in my house;
My rooms are rubb'd; keep it for hackney-men.

First Cheater.

We'll not offer it to your worship.

Simon.

Give me a play without a beast, I charge you.

Second Cheater.

That's hard; without a cuckold or a drunkard?

Simon.

Oh, those beasts are often the best-men
In a parish, and must not be kept out.
But which is your merriest play?
That I would hearken after.

Second Cheater.

Your worship shall hear
Their names, and take your choice.

Simon.

: And that's plain dealing. Come begin, fir.

Second Cheater.

The whirligig, the whibble, the carwidgen.

Simon.

Hey-dey! what names are these?

Second Cheater.

New names of late.
The wild-geese chase.

Simon.

Simon.

I understand thee now.

Second Cheater.

Gull upon gull.

Simon.

Why this is somewhat yet.

First Cheater.

Woodcock of our side.

Simon.

Get thee further off then.

Second Cheater.

The cheater and the clown.

Simon.

Is that come up again?

That was a play when I was 'prentice first.

Second Cheater.

Aye, but the cheater has learn'd more tricks of late,
And gulls the clown, with new additions.

Simon.

Then is your clown a coxcomb; which is he?

First Cheater.

This is our clown, fir.

Simon.

Fye, fye, your company
Must fall upon him and beat him; he's too fair, i'faith,
To make the people laugh.

First Cheater.

Not as he may be dress'd, fir.

Simon.

Faith, dress him how you will, I'll give him
That gift, he will never look half scurvily enough.
Oh, the clowns that I have seen in my time!
The very peeping out of one of them would have
Made a young heir laugh, though his father lay a dying;
A man undone in law the day before
(The saddest case that can be) might for his second
Have burst himself with laughing, and ended all
His miseries. Here was a merry world, my masters!
Some talk of things of state, of puling stuff;
There's nothing in a play like to a clown,
If he have the grace to hit on it, that's the thing indeed.
The

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH: 161

The king shews well, but he sets off the king ;
But not the king of Kent, I mean not so,
The king is one, I mean, I do not know.

Second Cheater.

Your worship speaks with safety, like a rich man,
And for your finding fault, our hopes are greater,
Neither with him the clown, nor me the cheater.

[Exeunt Players.]

Simon.

Away then, shift ; clown, to thy motley crupper,
We'll see them first, the king shall after supper.

Glover.

I commend your worship's wisdom in that, Mr. Mayor.

Simon.

Nay, 'tis a point of justice, if it be well examined,
Not to offer the king worse than I'll see myself ;
For a play, may be dangerous ; I have known
A great man poison'd in a play—

Glover.

What have you, Mr. Mayor ?

Simon.

But to what purpose many times, I know not.

Felt.

Methinks they should not destroy one another so.

Simon.

Oh, no, no ; he that's poison'd is always
Made privy to it, that's one good order
They have among them.—What joyful throat
Is that, Aminadab ? what is the meaning of this cry ?

[A shout within.]

Aminadab.

The rebel is taken.

Simon.

Oliver the puritan ?

Aminadab.

Oliver, puritan and fustian-weaver altogether.

Simon.

Fates, I thank you for this victorious day ;
Bonfires of pease-straw burn, let the bells ring.

VOL. XI.

M

Glover.

163: THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH

Glover.
There's two in mending, and you know they cannot.

Simon.
'Las the tenor's broken! ring out the treble.

[Oliver is brought in.]
I am over-cloy'd with joy; welcome, thou rebel!

Oliver.
I scorn thy welcome, I.

Simon.
Art thou yet so stout?
Wilt thou not stoop for grace? then get thee out.

Oliver.
I was not born to stoop but to my loom,
That seiz'd upon, my stooping days are done;
In plain terms, if thou hast any thing to say to me,
Send me away quickly, this is no biding-place,
I understand there are players in thy house,
Dispatch me, I charge thee, in the name of all
The brethren.

Simon.
Nay, now, proud rebel, I will make thee stay,
And, to thy greater torment, see a play.

Oliver.
Oh devil, I conjure thee by Amsterdam. ¹⁶

Simon.
Our word is past,
Justice may wink a while, but see at last.
[The play begins.] Hold, stop him, stop him.

Oliver.
Oh that profane trumpet! oh, oh.

Simon.
Set him down there, I charge you, officers.

Oliver.
I'll hide my ears and stop my eyes.

¹⁶ — *By Amsterdam.*] The toleration allowed to all religious sects in the United Provinces, on their throwing off the Spanish yoke, occasioned numbers of dissenters from the established religion of their country, to take refuge in different parts of the States of Holland. The chief place appears to have been Amsterdam, which is mentioned as such in several contemporary dramatic writers. See Ben Jonson's *Alchymist*, and *The Fair maid of the Inn*, by Beaumont and Fletcher.

Simon.

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 163

Simon.

Down with his golls, I charge you.¹⁷

Oliver.

Oh tyranny, tyranny, revenge it tribulation!
For rebels there are many deaths, but sure the only way
To execute a puritan, is seeing of a play.
Oh I shall swoond!

Simon.

Which if thou dost, to spite thee,
A player's boy shall bring thee aqua-vitæ.

Enter first Cheater.

Oliver.

Oh, I'll not swoon at all for't, though I die.

Simon.

Peace, here's a rascal, list and edify.

First Cheater.

I say still he's an ass that cannot live
By his wits.

Simon.

What a bold rascal's this?
He calls us all asses at first dash:
Sure none of us live by our wits, unless it be
Oliver the puritan.

Oliver.

I scorn as much to live by my wits

¹⁷ Down with his golls] Golls are hands. So in Dekker's wonderful years 1603.

"But seeing the chiefe leader dropt at his feete, and imagining at first
"hee was wounded a little in the head, held up his gowty gollies and
"blest himselfe," &c.

Dekker's Satiremastrix, 1601.

"Hold, hold up thy hand; I ha' seen the day thou didst not scorn to
"hold up thy golls."

Middleton's Chast Mayd in Cheape-side, 1630. P. 21.

"——— what their golls

"Can clutch, goes presently to their Molls and Dole."

Ben Jonson's Postaster, A. 5. S.

"Well said, my divine, dost Horace, bring the whorson detracting
"slaves to the bar, do: make 'em hold up their spread golls."

Maffinger's City Madam, A. 4. S. 1.

"The news hath reach'd

"The ordinaries, and all the gamesters are

"Ambitious to shake the golden golls

"Of worshipful Mr. Luke."

As the proudest of you all.

Simon.

Why then you're an ass for company,
So hold your prating.

Enter second Cheater.

Second Cheater.

Fellow in arms, welcome,
The news, the news?

Simon.

Fellow in arms, quoth he?
He may well call him fellow in arms.
I am sure they're both out at elbows.

Second Cheater.

Be lively, my heart, be lively, the booty
Is at hand, he's but a fool
Of a yeoman's eldest son; he's ballanc'd
On both sides, bully; he's going to buy
Household-stuff with one pocket, and to pay
Rent with the other.

First Cheater.

And if this be his last day, my chuck,
He shall forfeit his lease, quoth the one pocket,
And eat his meat in wooden platters, quoth the other.

Simon.

Faith then he's not so wise as he ought to be,
To let such tatterdemallians get
The upper hand of him.

Enter Clown.

First Cheater.

He comes.

Second Cheater.

Ay, but smally to our comfort,
With both his hands in his pockets; how is it possible
To pick a lock, when the key is on the inside of the door?

Simon.

Oh neighbours, here's the part now
That carries away the play; if the clown miscarry,
Farewel my hopes for ever, the play's spoil'd.

Clown.

They say there is a foolish kind of a thing call'd a cheater
Abroad,

Abroad, that will gull any yeoman's son
 Of his purse, and laugh in his face like an Irishman.
 I would fain meet with some of these creatures ;
 I am in as good state to be gull'd now
 As ever I was in my life, for I have two purses
 At this time about me, and I would fain be
 Acquainted with that rascal that would take
 One of them now.

Simon.

Faith, thou may'st be acquainted with two or three
 That will do their good wills, I warrant thee.

First Cheater.

That way's too plain, too easy, I am afraid.

Second Cheater.

Come, fir, your most familiar cheats take best,
 They shew like natural things and least suspected ;
 Give me a round shilling quickly.

First Cheater.

It will fetch
 But one of his hands neither, if it take.

Second Cheater.

Thou art too covetous ; let's have one out first, pr'ythee,
 There's time enough to fetch out th' other after.
 Thou liest, 'tis lawful current money. [*They draw.*]

First Cheater.

I say 'tis copper in some countries.

Clown.

Here is a fray towards,
 But I will hold my hands, let who will part them.

Second Cheater.

Copper ? I defy thee, and now I shall disprove thee.
 Look you, here's an honest yeoman's son of the country,
 A man of judgment—

Clown.

Pray you be covered, fir,
 I have eggs in my cap, and cannot put it off.

Second Cheater.

Will you be tried by him ?

First Cheater.

I am content, fir.

Simon.

They look rather as if they would be tried next sessions.

First Cheater.

Pray give your judgment of this piece of coin, fir.

Clown.

Nay if it be coin you strive about,
Let me see it, I love money.

First Cheater.

Look on it well, fir, [They pick his pocket.

Second Cheater.

Let him do his worst, fir.

Clown.

Y'had both need wear cut clothes, y'are so choleric.

Second Cheater.

Nay rub it and spare not, fir,

Clown.

Now by this silver, gentlemen,
It is good money, would I had an hundred of them.

Second Cheater.

We hope well, fir—Th' other pocket,
And we are made men. [Exeunt.

Simon.

Oh neighbours, I begin to be sick of this fool,
To see him thus couzen'd, I would make his case my own.

Clown.

Still would I meet with these things call'd cheaters.

Simon.

A whoreson coxcomb, they have met with thee.
I can no longer endure him with patience.

Clown.

Oh my rent! my whole year's rent!

Simon.

A murrain on you,
This makes us landlords stay so long for our money.

Clown.

The cheaters have been here.

Simon.

A scurvy hobby-horse, that could not leave
His money with me, having such a charge about him.

A pox on thee for an ass, thou play a clown?
I will commit thee for offering it—Officers,
Away with him.

Clown.

What means your worship? why, you'll spoil the play, sir.

Simon.

Before the king of Kent shall be thus serv'd,
I'll play the clown myself—away with him.

Clown.

With me? if it please your worship it was my part.

Simon.

But 'twas a foolish part
As ever thou playd'st in thy life: I'll make thee
Smoak for it; I'll teach thee to understand
To play a clown; thou shalt know every man
Is not born to it—away with him quickly, [*Exit Clown.*
He'll have the other pocket pick'd else,
I heard them say it with my own ears.
See, he's come in another disguise
To cheat thee again.

Enter second Cheater.

Second Cheater.

Pish, whither goes he now?

Simon.

Come on, sir, let us see
What your knaveship can do at me now;
You must not think you have a clown in hand.
The fool I have committed too, for playing the part.
[*He throws off his gown, discovering his doublet with
a fatten forepart and a canvas back.*

Second Cheater.

What's here to do?

Glover.

Eye, good sir, come away:
Will your worship bafe yourself to pay a clown?

Second Cheater.

I beseech your worship let us have our own clown,
I know not how to go forwards else.

Simon.

Knave, play out thy part with me,

Or I'll lay thee by the heels all the days of thy life.
 Why, how now, my masters, who is that laugh'd at me?
 Cannot a man of worship play the clown
 A little for his pleasure but he must be laugh'd at?
 Do you know who I am? Is the king's deputy
 Of no better account among you?
 Was I chosen to be laugh'd at? Where's my clerk?

Aminadab.

Here, if it please your worship.

Simon.

Take a note of all those that laugh at me,
 That when I have done I may commit them.
 Let me see who dare do it now.—And now
 To you once again, sir cheater; look you;
 Here are my purse-strings, I do defy thee.

Second Cheater.

Good sir, tempt me not; my part is so written,
 That I should cheat your worship if you were my father.

Simon.

I should have much joy to have such a rascal to my son,

Second Cheater.

Therefore I beseech your worship pardon me;
 The part has more knavery in it than when
 Your worship saw it at first; I assure you
 You'll be deceiv'd in it, sir; the new additions
 Will take any man's purse in Kent, or Kircendom.

Simon.

If thou canst take my purse, I'll give it thee freely;
 And do thy worst, I charge thee, as thou'lt answer it.

Second Cheater,

I shall offend your worship.

Simon.

Knave, do it quickly.

Second Cheater.

Say you so? then there's for you, and here is for me.

[*Throws meal in his face, takes his purse, and exit.*]

Simon.

Oh bless me! neighbours, I am in a fog,
 A cheater's fog, I can see nobody.

Glover.

Run, follow him, officers.

Simon.

Simon.

Away, let him go; he will have all your purses
If he come back. A pox on your new additions;
They spoil all the plays that ever they come in;
The old way had no such roguery in it.
Call you this a merry comedy, when a man's eyes
Are put out in't? Brother Honey-suckle!

Felt-maker.

What says your worship?

Simon.

I make you deputy,
To rule the town till I can see again,
Which will be within these nine days at farthest,
Nothing grieves me now, but that I hear
Oliver the rebel laugh at me; a pox
On your puritan face, this will make you
In love with plays as long as you live,
We shall not keep you from them now.

Oliver.

In sincerity
I was never better pleas'd at an exercise¹⁸. Ha, ha, ha!

Simon.

Neighbours, what colour was the dust
The rascal threw in my face?

Glover.

'Twas meal, if it please your worship.

Simon.

Meal! I am glad of it,
I'll hang the miller for selling it.

Glover.

Nay, ten to one
The cheater never bought it; he stole it certainly.

Simon.

Why, then I'll hang the cheater for stealing it,
And the miller for being out of the way when he did it.

¹⁸ *At an exercise.*] Alluding to the week-day sermons used by the Puritans, which they called *Exercises*. S. P.

Felt-maker.

Ay, but your worship was in the fault yourself;
You bid him do his worst.

Simon.

His worst; that's true,
But the rascal hath done his best; for I know not how
A villain could put out a man's eyes better,
And leave them in his head, as he has done mine.

Aminadab.

Where is my master's worship?

Simon.

How now, Aminadab? I hear thee, though I see thee
not.

Aminadab.

You are couzened, sir; they are all professed
Cheaters; they have stolen two silver spoons,
And the clown took his heels with all celerity;
They only take the name of country-comedians
To abuse simple people with a printed play or two,
Which they bought at Canterbury for six-pence;
And what is worse, they speak but
What they list of it, and fribble out the rest.

Simon.

Here's no abuse ¹⁹ to the common-wealth,
If a man could see to look into it.
But mark the cunning of these cheating slaves,
First they make justice blind, then play the knaves.

Enter Hengist.

Hengist.

Where's Mr. Mayor?

Glover.

Ods precious! brother,
The king of Kent is newly alighted.

Simon.

The king of Kent!
Where is he? that I should live to this day,

¹⁹ Here's no abuse, &c.] See note 11. p. 127.

And

And yet not live to see to bid him welcome !

Hengist.

Where is Simonides, our friendly host ?

Simon.

Ah, blind as one that had been fox'd a sevensnight.

Hengist.

Why, how now, man ?

Simon.

Faith, practising a clown's part for your grace,
I have practis'd both my eyes out.

Hengist.

What need you practise that ?

Simon.

A man is never too old to learn, your grace
Will say so, when you hear the jest of it ;
The truth is, my lord, I meant to have been merry,
And now it is my luck to weep water and oatmeal ;
I shall see again at supper, I make no doubt of it.

Hengist.

This is strange to me, sirs.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gentleman.

Arm, arm, my lord !

Hengist.

What's that ?

Gentleman.

With swiftest speed, if ever you'll behold
The queen, your daughter, alive again.

Hengist.

Roxena ?

Gentleman.

They are besieged : Aurelius
Ambrose, and his brother, Uther,
With numbers infinite of British forces,
Beset their castle, and they cannot 'scape
Without your speedy succour.

Hengist.

For her safety I'll forget food and rest : away.

Simon.

172 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Simon.

I hope your worship will hear the jest ere you go.

Hengist.

The jest ! torment me not.

Simon.

I'll follow you to Wales with a dog and a bell
But I will tell it you.

Hengist.

Unseasonable folly !

[*Exit cum suis.*]

Simon.

'Tis a sign of war, when great men disagree ;
Look to the rebel well, till I can see,
And when my fight is recover'd I will have
His eyes pull'd out for a fortnight.

Oli-ver.

My eyes ? hang thee,
A deadly sin or two shall pluck them out first,
That is my resolution. Ha, ha, ha !

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II.

*Enter Aurelius and Uther, with soldiers ; Vortiger and
Horsus above.*

Uther.

MY lord, the castle is so fortified—

Aurelius.

Let wild-fire ruin it,
That his destruction may appear to him
In the figure of Heaven's wrath at the last day,
That murderer of our brother. Hence, away,
I'll send my heart no peace till it be consum'd.

Uther.

There he appears again—behold, my lord.

Aurelius.

Oh that the zealous fire on my soul's altar,
To the high birth of virtue consecrated,

Would

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 173

Would fit me with a lightning now to blast him,
Even as I look upon him.

Usher.

Good, my lord,
Your anger is too noble, and too precious
To waste itself on guilt so foul as his;
Let ruin work her will.

Vortiger.

Beginst all round?

Horfus.

All, all, my lord, 'tis folly to make doubt of it;
You question things that horror long ago
Resolv'd us on.

Vortiger.

Give me leave, Horfus, though——

Horfus.

Do what you will, sir, question them again,
I'll tell them to you.

Vortiger.

Not so, sir,
I will not have them told again.

Horfus.

It rests then.

Vortiger.

That's an ill word put in, when thy heart knows
There is no rest at all, but torment making.

Horfus.

True, my heart finds it; that fits weeping blood now
For poor Roxena's safety. You'll confess, my lord,
My love to you has brought me to this danger?
I could have liv'd like Hengist, king of Kent,
London, York, Lincoln, and Winchester,
Under the power of my command, the portion
Of my most just desert, enjoyed now
By pettier deservers.

Vortiger.

Say you so, sir?
And you'll confess, since you began confession
(A thing I should have died ere I had thought on)
Y'have marr'd the fashion of your affection utterly,

In

174 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

In your own wicked counsel, there you paid me ;
 You were bound in conscience to love me after,
 You were bound to't, as men in honesty,
 That vitiate virgins, to give dowries to them ;
 My faith was pure before to a faithful woman.

Horfus.

My lord, my counsel——

Vortiger.

Why, I'll be judg'd by these
 That knit death in their brows, and hold me now
 Not worth the acception of a flattery,
 Most of whose faces smil'd when I smil'd once—
 My lords !

Utber.

Reply not, brother.

Vortiger.

Seeds of scorn,
 I mind you not, I speak to them alone
 Whose force makes yours a power, which else were none.
 Shew me the main food of your hate ; which cannot be
 The murder of Constantius, that crawls in your revenges ;
 For your loves were violent long since that.

First Lord.

And had been still.
 If from that Pagan wound th'hadst kept thee free ;
 But when thou fled'st from Heav'n, we fled from thee.

Vortiger.

This was your counsel now.

Horfus.

Mine ? 'twas the counsel
 Of your own lust and blood, your appetite knows it.

Vortiger.

May thunder strike me from these walls, my lords,
 And leave me many leagues off from your eyes,
 If this be not the man, whose Stygian soul
 Breath'd forth that counsel to me, and sole plotter
 Of all those false injurious disgraces,
 That have abus'd the virtuous patience
 Of our religious queen.

Horfus.

A devil in madness !

Vortiger.

Vortiger.

Upon whose life I swear, there sticks no stain
But what's most wrongful; and where now she thinks
A rape dwells on her honour, only I
Her ravisher was, and his the policy.

Aurelius.

Inhuman practice!

Vortiger.

Now you know the truth.
Will his death serve your fury?

Horfus.

My death?

Vortiger.

Say, will it do it?

Horfus.

Say they should say 'twould do't?

Vortiger.

Why, then it must.

Horfus.

It must?

Vortiger.

It shall. Speak but the word, it shall be yielded up.

Horfus.

Believe him not; he cannot do it.

Vortiger.

Cannot?

Horfus.

'Tis but a false and base insinuation
For his own life, and like his late submission.

Vortiger.

O sting to honour! alive or dead, thou goest
For that word's rudeness only. [Stabs him.

First Lord.

See, sin needs
No other destruction than it breeds.
In its own bosom.

Vortiger.

Such another brings him.

Horfus.

What! has thy vile rage stamp'd a wound upon me?
I'll

176 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

I'll send one to thy soul shall never heal for't.

Vortiger.

How, to my soul?

Horfus.

It shall be thy master torment,
Both for the pain and the everlastingness.

Vortiger.

Ha, ha, ha !

Horfus.

Dost laugh ? take leave of it ; all eternity
Shall never see thee do so much again.
Know, th'art a cuckold.

Vortiger.

What !

Horfus.

You change too soon, fir.
Roxena, whom th'hast rais'd to thy own ruin,
She was my whore in Germany.

Vortiger.

Burst me open, the violence of whirlwinds.

Horfus.

Hear me out first.
For her embrace, which my flesh yet sits warm in,
I was thy friend and follower.

Vortiger.

Deafen me,
Thou most imperious noise that starts the world !

Horfus.

And to serve both our lusts, I practis'd with thee
Against thy virtuous queen.

Vortiger.

Bane to all comforts !

Horfus.

Whose faithful sweetness, too precious for thy blood,
I made thee change for love's hypocrisy.

Vortiger.

Insufferable !

Horfus.

Only to make my way to pleasure fearless,
Free, and fluent.

Vortiger.

THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH. 177

Vortiger.

Hell's trump is in that throat.

Horfus.

It shall sound shriller.

Vortiger.

I'll dam it up with death first.

[*They stab each other. Roxena enters in fear.*]

Roxena.

Oh for succour!

Who's near? Help me, save me, the flame follows me,

'Tis in the figure of young Vortimer, the prince,

Whose life I took by poison.

Horfus.

Hold out, breath, and I shall find thee quickly.

Vortiger.

I'll tug thy soul out here.

Horfus.

Do, monster.

Roxena.

Vortiger!

Vortiger.

Monster!

Roxena.

My lord!

Vortiger.

Toad! Pagan!

Horfus.

Viper! Christian!

Roxena.

Oh hear me,

Oh help me, my love, my lord, 'tis here.

Horfus, look up, if not to succour me,

To see me yet consum'd. Oh what is love,

When life is not regarded?

Vortiger.

What strength's left I'll fix upon thy throat.

Horfus.

I have some force yet.

[*Both stab, Horfus falls.*]

Roxena.

No way to 'scape? Is this the end of glory?

VOL. XI.

N

Doubly

178 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Doubly beset with enemies, wrath and fire?
It comes nearer—rivers and fountains, fall.
It sucks away my breath: I cannot give
A curse to sin, and hear't out while I live. *Help, help.*
[*She falls.*]

Vortiger.

Burn, burn, now I can tend thee.
Take time with her in torment; call her life
Afar off to thee; dry up her strumpet-blood,
And hardly parch the skin. Let one heat strangle her;
Another fetch her to her sense again;
And the worst pain be only her reviving.
Follow her eternally—Oh mystical harlot,
Thou hast thy full due. Whom lust crown'd queen before,
Flames crown her now a most triumphant whore.
And that end crown them all! [*He falls.*]

Aurelius.

Our peace is full
In yon usurper's fall; nor have I known
A judgment meet more fearfully.
Here, take this ring, deliver the good queen,
And those grave pledges of her murder'd honour,
(Her worthy father, and her noble uncle.)
How now! the meaning of these sounds?

Enter Hengist, Devonshire, Stafford, and soldiers.

Hengist.

The consumer has been here; she's gone, she's lost;
In glowing cinders now lie all my joys.
The headlong fortune of my rash captivity
Strikes not so deep a wound into my hopes
As thy dear loss.

Aurelius.

Her father and her uncle!

First Lord.

They are indeed, my lord.

Aurelius.

Part of my wishes.
What fortunate power has prevented me,
And ere my love came, brought them victory?

First

First Lord.

My wonder sticks in Hengist, king of Kent.

Devonshire.

My lord, to make that plain which now I see
Fix'd in astonishment ; the only name
Of your return and being, brought such gladness
To this distracted kingdom, that, to express
A thankfulness to Heaven, it grew great
In charitable actions ; from which goodness
We taste our liberty, who liv'd engag'd
Upon the innocence of woman's honour,
(A kindness that even threatened to undo us ;)
And having newly but enjoy'd the benefit
And fruits of our enlargement, 'twas our happiness
To intercept this monster of ambition,
Bred in these times of usurpation,
The rankness of whose insolence and treason
Grew to such height, 'twas arm'd to bid you battle :
Whom, as our fame's redemption, on our knees
We present captive.

Aurelius.

Had it needed reason,
You richly came provided. I understood
Not your deserts till now.—My honoured lords,
Is this that German Saxon, whose least thirst
Could not be satisfied under a province ?

Hengist.

Had but my fate directed this bold arm
To thy life, the whole kingdom had been mine,
That was my hope's great aim. I have a thirst
Could never have been full quench'd under all.
The whole must do't, or nothing.

Aurelius.

A strange draught !
And what a little ground shall death now teach you
To be content withal ?

Hengist.

Why let it then ;
For none else can : y'have nam'd the only way
To limit my ambition : a full cure
For all my fading hopes and sickly fears ;

180 THE MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH.

Nor shall it be less welcome to me now,
Than a fresh acquisition would have been
Unto my new-built kingdoms. Life to me
(‘Less it be glorious) is a misery.

Aurelius.

That pleasure we will do you—Lead him out ;
And when we have inflicted our just doom
On his usurping head, it will become
Our pious care to see this realm secur’d
From the convulsions it hath long endur’d.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

EDITION.

EDITION.

THE
MAYOR OF QUINBOROUGH:
A COMEDY.

As it hath been often acted with much Applause at BLACK FRIZES,
By His MAJESTY'S SERVANTS.

WRITTEN BY
THO. MIDDLETON.

L O N D O N :

Printed for HENRY HERRINGMAN; and are to be sold
at his Shop, at the Sign of the *Blow Anchor*,
in the Lower Walk of the *New Exchange*.

1661. 4to.



G R I M,

The Collier of Croydon.



THE initial letters J. T. are placed before this play, as those belonging to the author of it. What his name was, or what his condition, are alike unknown. It was printed in 12mo. 1662, with two others, *Thorny Abby*, or *The London Maid*, and *The Marriage Broker*, in a volume entitled *Gratiæ Theatrales*, or *A Choice Ternary of English Plays*. Cbetwood says, it was printed in 1599, and *Whincop*, in the year 1606. I cannot but suspect the fidelity of both these writers in this particular.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ST. DUNSTAN, *Abbot of Glasfenbury,*
MORGAN, *Earl of London.*
LACY, *Earl of Kent.*
HONOREA, *Morgan's daughter.*
MARIAN, *her Waiting-maid.*
NAN, *Marian's maid,*
MUSGRAVE, *a young Gentleman.*
CAPTAIN Clinton.
MILES FORREST, *a Gentleman.*
RALPH HARVY, *an Apothecary.*
GRIM, *the Collier of Croydon.*
PARSON Short-boss.
CLACK, *a Miller.*
JOAN, *a Country Maid,*
PLUTO.
MINOS.
ÆACUS.
RHADAMANTHUS,
BELPHAGOR.
AKERCOCK, *or Robin Goodfellow.*
MALBECCO *his Ghost, Officers, Attendants, &c.*

} Devils,

The Scene ENGLAND,

P R O-

P R O L O G U E.

You're welcome : but our plot I dare not tell ye,
 For fear I fright a lady with great belly :
 Or should a scold be 'mong you, I dare say
 She'd make more work, than the devil, in the play.
 Heard you not never how an actor's wife,
 Whom he, fond fool, lov'd dearly as his life,
 Coming in's way did chance to get a Jape¹,
 As he was tired in his devil's shape ;
 And how equivoecal a generation
 Was then begot, and brought forth thereupon ?
 Let it not fright you ; this I dare to say,
 Here is no lecherous devil in our play.
 He will not rumple Peg, nor Joan, nor Nan,
 But has enough at home to do with Marian ;
 Whom he so little pleases, she in scorn
 Does teach his devilship to wind the horn.
 But if your children cry when Robin comes,
 You may to still them buy here pears or plumbs.
 Then sit you quiet all, who are come in,
 St. Dunstan will soon enter and begin.

¹ *A Jape.*] See Note to Gammer Gurton's Needle, vol. 2. p. 68.

G R I M²,

The Collier of Croydon.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

A place being provided for the devils' confistory, enter St. Dunstan with his beads, book, and crozier-staff, &c.

St. Dunstan.

ENVY, that always waits on virtue's train,
 And tears the graves of quiet sleeping souls,
 Hath brought me, after many hundred years,
 To shew myself again upon the earth.
 Know then (who list) that I am English born,
 My name is Dunstan; whilst I liv'd with men,
 Chief primate of the holy English church:
 I was begotten in West Saxony:
 My father's name was Heorston, my mother's Cinifred,
 Endowed with my merit's legacy,
 I flourish'd in the reign of seven great kings;
 The first was Adelstane, whose niece Elfeda,
 Malicious tongues reported, I defiled:
 Next him came Edmond, then Edred, and Edwin;
 And after him reign'd Edgar, a great prince,
 But full of many crimes, which I restrain'd:

² The story of this play is taken in part from Machiavel's Belphegor.
 S. P.

Edward

Edward his son, and lastly Egelred.
 With all these kings was I in high esteem,
 And kept both them, and all the land in awe ;
 And, had I liv'd, the Danes had never boasted
 Their then beginning conquest of this land.
 Yet some accuse me for a conjurer,
 By reason of those many miracles
 Which Heaven for holy life endowed me with ;
 But who so looks into the golden legend ³,
 (That sacred register of holy saints)
 Shall find me by the pope canoniz'd,
 And happily the cause of this report
 Might rise by reason of a vision,
 Which I beheld in great king Edgar's days,
 Being that time abbot of Glasfenbury,
 Which (for it was a matter of some worth)
 I did make known to few, until this day :
 But now I purpose that the world shall see
 How much those slanderers have wronged me ;
 Nor will I trouble you with courts and kings ;
 Or drive a feigned battle out of breath ;
 Or keep a coil myself upon the stage ;
 But think you see me in my secret cell,
 Arm'd with my portass, bidding of my beads.
 But on a sudden I'm o'ercome with sleep !
 If ought ensue, watch you, for Dunstan dreams.

*He layeth him down to sleep ; lightning and thunder ; the
 curtains drawn on a sudden ; Pluto, Minos, Æacus,
 Rhadamanthus, set in counsel ; before them Malbecco's ghost
 guarded with furies.*

Pluto.

You ever dreaded judges of black hell,
 Grim Minos, Æacus, and Rhadamant,
 Lords of Cocytus, Styx, and Phlegiton,
 Princes of darkness, Pluto's ministers,
 Know that the greatness of his present cause

³ *The golden legend.*] *Legenda aurea, or the Golden Legend*, translated out of the French, and printed by Caxton in folio, 1483.

Hath made ourself in person sit as judge,
 To hear the arraignment of Malbecco's ghost.
 Stand forth; thou ghastly pattern of despair;
 And to this powerful synod tell thy tale,
 That we may hear if thou canst justly say
 Thou wert not author of thy own decay.

Malbecco ⁴.

Infernal Jove, great prince of Tartary,
 With humble reverence poor Malbecco speaks;
 Still trembling with the fatal memory
 Of his so late concluded tragedy.
 I was (with thanks to your great bounty) bred
 A wealthy lord, whilst that I liv'd on earth;
 And so might have continu'd to this day,
 Had not that plague of mankind fall'n on me:
 For I (poor man) join'd woe unto my name,
 By choosing out a woman for my wife.
 A wife! a curse ordained for the world.
 Fair Helena! fair she was indeed,
 But foully stain'd with inward wickedness.
 I kept her bravely, and I lov'd her dear;
 But that dear love did cost my life, and all.
 To reckon up a thousand of her pranks,
 Her pride, her wasteful spending, her unkindness;
 Her false dissembling, seeming sanctity,
 Her scolding, pouting, prating, meddling,
 And twenty hundred more of the same stamp,
 Were but to reap an endless catalogue
 Of what the world is plagu'd with every day.
 But for the main of that I have to tell,
 It chanced thus: Late in a rainy night
 A crew of gallants came unto my house,
 And (will I, nill I) would forsooth be lodg'd:
 I brought them in, and made them all good cheer,
 (Such as I had in store) and lodg'd them soft.
 Amongst them one, ycleped ⁵ Paridell,

⁴ *Malbecco's ghost*.] See the story of Malbecco in *Spenser's Fairy Queen*. B. 3. C. 9. &c.

⁵ *ycleped*.] *Cleped* is called, named.

Milton's *L'Allegro*, L. 11:

"But come, thou goddess fair and free,

"In Heav'n ycleap'd Euphrosine."

The letter *y* is added, to lengthen it a syllable.

(The

GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON. 191

(The falsest thief that ever trod on ground)
 Robb'd me; and with him stole away my wife.
 I (for I lov'd her dear) pursu'd the thief;
 And after many days in travel spent,
 Found her amongst a crew of satyrs wild,
 Kissing and colling ⁶ all the live-long night.
 I spake her fair, and pray'd her to return;
 But she in scorn commands me to be gone,
 And glad I was to fly, to save my life;
 But when I backward came unto my house,
 I find it spoil'd, and all my treasure gone.
 Desprate and mad, I ran, I know not whither,
 Calling and crying out on Heaven and fate;
 Till seeing none to pity my distress,
 I threw myself down headlong on a rock,
 And so concluded all my ills at once.
 Now, judge you, justice benchers, if my wife
 Were not the instrument to end my life.

Pluto.

Can it be possible (you lords of hell)
 Malbecco's tale of women should be true?
 Is marriage now become so great a curse,
 That whilome was the comfort of the world?

Kissing and colling.] *Colling* is embracing round the neck. *Dare bra-*
ebia cervici, as Barret explains it in his *Alvarius voce colle*. The word is
 frequently to be found in ancient writers.

Erasmus Praise of Folie, 1549. Sign B 2.

"—for els, what is it in younge babes that we dooe kyse so, we
 "doe *colle* so; we do cheryshe so, that a very enemy is moved to spare
 "and succour this age."

Wily beguiled. 1606.

"I'll clasp thee, and clip thee; *coll thee*, and kisse thee; till I be bet-
 "ter than naught, and worse than nothing."

The Witch, by Middleton. MSS.

"When hundred leagues in aire we feast and sing,
 "Daunce, kyse, and coll, use every thing."

The Woorkes of a Young Wit. 1577. P. 37.

"Then for Gods sake, let young folkes *coll* and kisse,
 "When oldest folkes will thinke it not amisse.

Minos.

Minos.

Women, it seems, have lost their native shame,
 As no man better may complain than I,
 Though not of any whom I made my wife,
 But of my daughter, who procur'd my fall.

Æacus.

'Tis strange what complaints are brought us every day
 Of men made miserable by marriage;
 So that amongst a thousand, scarcely ten
 Have not some grievous actions 'gainst their wives.

Rhadamanthus.

My lord, if Rhadamant might counsel you,
 Your grace should send some one into the world,
 That might make proof if it be true or no.

Pluto.

And wisely hast thou counsell'd, Rhadamant.
 Call in Belphagor to me presently;

[One of the furies goes for Belphagor.]

He is the fittest that I know in hell,
 To undertake a task of such import;
 For he is patient, mild, and pitiful:
 Humours but ill agreeing with our kingdom.

Enter Belphagor.

And here he comes; Belphagor, so it is,
 We in our awful synod have decreed,
 (Upon occasions to ourselves best known)
 That thou from hence shalt go into the world,
 And take upon thee the shape of a man;
 In which estate thou shalt be married;
 Choose thee a wife that best may please thyself,
 And live with her a twelvemonth and a day;
 Thou shalt be subject unto human chance,
 So far as common wit cannot relieve thee;
 Thou shalt of us receive ten thousand pounds,
 Sufficient stock to use for thy increase:
 But whatsoever happens in that time,
 Look not from us for succour or relief;
 This shalt thou do, and when the time's expired,
 Bring word to us what thou hast seen and done.

Belphagor.

Belphegor.

With all my heart, my lord, I am content,
So I may have my servant Akercock
To wait upon me as if he were my man,
That he may witness likewise what is done.

Pluto.

We are contented; he shall go with thee.

Minos.

But what mean time decrees your majesty
Of poor Malbecco?

Pluto.

He shall rest with us
Until Belphegor do return again;
And as he finds, so will we give his doom.
Come let us go and set our spyal⁷ forth,
Who for a time must make experiment,
If hell be not on earth, as well as here.

[*Exeunt.*

[*It thunders and lightens; the devils go forth; Dunstan rising, runneth about the stage, laying about him with his staff.*]

St. Dunstan.

Satan, avaunt! thou art man's enemy;
Thou shalt not live amongst us so unseen,
So to betray us to the prince of darkness:
Satan, avaunt! I do conjure thee hence.
What dream'st thou, Dunstan? yea I dream'd indeed.
Must then the devil come into the world?
Such is belike the infernal king's decree;
Well, be it so; for Dunstan is content.
Mark well the process of the devil's disguise,
Who happily may learn you to be wise.

⁷ *Come let us go and set our spyal forth.*] *Spyal* is a *spy*, obsolete. So in Ben Jonson's *Catiline*, A. 4. S. 3.

"I have those eyes and ears shall still keep guard

"And *spial* on thee, as they've ever done,

"And thou not feel it."

Roger Ascham's *Report and Discourse of the State of Germany*, p. 31.

"— He went into France secretly, and was there with Shirtly as a common launce knight, and named hymselfe Capitaine Paul, lest the Emperours *spials* should get out his doynge."

Women, beware ; and make your bargains well,
The devil, to chuse a wife, is come from hell. [Exit.

S C E N E II.

Enter Morgan Earl of London, Lacy Earl of Kent, with Miles Forrest.

Morgan.

MY lord of Kent, your honour knows my mind,
That ever has, and still does honour you,
Accounting it my daughter's happiness,
(Amidst her other infelicities)
That you vouchsafe to love her as you do :
How gladly I would grant your lordship's suit
The Heavens can witness, which, with ruthless ears
Have often heard my yet unpitied plaints ;
And could I find some means for her recovery,
None but yourself should have her to your wife.

Lacy.

My lord of London, now long time it is
Since Lacy first was suitor to your daughter,
The fairest Honorea ; in whose eyes
Honour itself in love's sweet bosom lies :
What shall we say, or seem to strive with Heaven,
Who speechless sent her first into the world ?
In vain it is for us to think to loose
That which by nature's self we see is bound :
Her beauty, with her other virtues join'd,
Are gifts sufficient, tho' she want a tongue ;
And some will count it virtue in a woman
Still to be bound to unoffending silence ;
Tho' I could wish with half of all my lands,
That she could speak : but since it may not be,
'Twere vain to imprison beauty with her speech.

Forrest.

Forrest.

Have you not heard, my lords, the wondrous fame
Of holy Dunstan, abbot of Glasfenbury ?
What miracles he hath atchieved of late ;
And how the rood of Dovercot^{*} did speak,
Confirming his opinion to be true ;
And how the holy confistory fell,
With all the monks that were assembled there,
Saving one beam whereon this Dunstan fate ;
And other more such miracles as these.
They say he is of such religious life,
That angels often use to talk with him,
And tell to him the secrets of the heavens.
No question, if your honours would but try,
He could procure my lady for to speak.

Morgan.

Believe me, Forrest, thou hast well advised,
For I have heard of late much talk of him.

Lacy.

Is not that Dunstan he who check'd the king
About his privy dealing with the nun,
And made him to do penance for the fault ?

Morgan.

The same is he ; for whom I straight will send.
Miles Forrest shall in post to Glasfenbury,
And gently pray the abbot for my sake
To come to London ; sure I hope the heavens
Have ordain'd Dunstan to do Morgan good.

Lacy.

Let us dispatch him thither presently ;
For I myself will stay for his return,
And see some end or other ere I go.

Morgan.

Come then, lord Lacy ; Forrest, come away. [*Exeunt.*]

^{*} *Dovercot*] In the county of Essex, the mother church of Harwich.

S C E N E III.

Enter Belpagor attired like a physician; Akercock, his man, in a tawny coat.

Belpagor.

NOW is Belpagor, an incarnate devil,
Come to the earth to seek him out a dame;
Hell be my speed! and so, I hope, it will.
In lovely London are we here arrived.
Where, as I hear, the earl hath a fair daughter
So full of virtue, and soft modesty,
That yet she never gave a man foul word.

Akercock.

Marry, indeed, they say she cannot speak.

Belpagor.

For this cause have I taken this disguise,
And will profess me a physician,
Come up on purpose for to cure the lady;
Marry, no maid^o shall bind me but herself;
And she I do intend shall be my wife.

Akercock.

But, master, tell me one thing by the way;
Do you not mean that I shall marry too?

Belpagor.

No, Akercock, thou shalt be still unwed;
For if they be as bad as is reported,
One wife will be enough to tire us both.

Akercock.

O, then you mean that I shall now and then
Have, as it were, a course at base with her.

Belpagor.

Not so, not so; that's one of marriage plagues,
Which I must seek to shun, amongst the rest,
And live in sweet contentment with my wife;
That when I back again return to hell
All women may be bound to reverence me,

For saving of their credits, as I will.
But who comes here?

Enter Captain Clinton.

Clinton.

This needs must tickle Musgrave to the quick,
And stretch his heart-strings farther by an inch,
That Lacy must be married to his love;
And by that match my market is near marr'd,
For Mariana, whom I most affect;
But I must cast about by some device
To help myself, and to prevent the earl.

Belpagor.

This fellow fitly comes to meet with me,
Who seems to be acquainted with the earl.
Good fortune guide you, sir!

Clinton.

As much to you.

Belpagor.

Might I intreat a favour at your hands?

Clinton.

What's that?

Belpagor.

I am a stranger here in England, sir,
Brought from my native home, upon report
That the earl's daughter wants the use of speech:
I have been practised in such cures ere now,
And willingly would try my skill on her.
Let me request you so to favour me,
As to direct me to her father's house.

Clinton.

With all my heart, and welcome shall you be
To that good earl, who mourns his daughter's want;
But they have for a holy abbot sent,
Who can, men say, do many miracles,
In hope that he will work this wond'rous cure.

Belpagor.

Whate'er he be, I know 'tis past his skill;
Nor any in the world, besides myself,
Did ever sound the depth of that device.

O 3

Enter

Enter Musgrave.

Clinton.

Musgrave, well met ; I needs must speak with you.

Musgrave.

I came to seek you.

Clinton.

Tarry you a while.

Shall I intreat you, sir, to walk before

With this same gentleman ? I'll overtake you.

[*Exeunt Bel. & Aker.*

This is the news ; the earl of Kent is come,

And in all haste the marriage must be made.

Your lady weeps, and knows not what to do ;

But hopes that you will work some means or other

To stop the cross proceedings of the earl.

Musgrave.

Alas, poor Clinton ! what can Musgrave do ?

Unless I should by stealth convey her thence ;

On which a thousand dangers do depend.

Clinton.

Well, to be brief, because I cannot stay,
Thus stands the case ; if you will promise me,
To work your cousin Marian to be mine,
I'll so devise that you shall purchase her ;
And therefore tell me if you like the match ?

Musgrave.

With all my heart, sir, yea and thank you too.

Clinton.

Then say no more, but leave the rest to me,
For I have plotted how it shall be done.

I must go follow yon fair gentleman,

On whom I build my hopes. Musgrave, adieu.

Musgrave.

Clinton, farewell ; I'll wish thee good success. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Morgan, Lacy, Dunstan, Forrest, Honorea, Marian.

Morgan.

THOU holy man, to whom the higher Powers
Have given the gift of cures beyond conceit,
Welcome thou art unto earl Morgan's house ;
The house of sorrow yet, unless by thee
Our joys may spring anew ; which, if they do,
Reward and praise shall both attend on thee.

Lacy.

And we will ever reverence thy name,
Making the chronicles to speak thy praise ;
So Honorea may but have her speech.

Dunstan.

My lords, you know the hallowed gift of tongues
Comes from the self-same power that gives us breath ;
He binds and looseth them at his dispose ;
And in his name will Dunstan undertake
To work this cure upon fair Honorea.
Hang there, my harp, my solitary muse,
Companion of my contemplation.

[He hangs his harp on the wall.]

And, lady, kneel with me upon the earth,
That both our prayers may ascend to heaven.

[They kneel down ; then enters Clinton, with Belphagor, terming himself Castiliano, and Akercock, as Robin Goodfellow.]

Clinton.

So shall you do the lady a good turn,
And bind both him and me to you for ever.

Belphagor.

I have determin'd what I mean to do.

Clinton.

Here be the earls, and with them is the friar.

Belpagor.

What is he praying ?

Clinton.

So methinks he is ;
But I'll disturb him. By your leave, my lords,
Here is a stranger from beyond the seas
Will undertake to cure your lordship's daughter.

Morgan.

The holy abbot is about the cure.

Belpagor.

Yea, but, my lord, he'll never finish it.

Morgan.

How canst thou tell ? what countryman art thou ?

Belpagor.

I am by birth, my lord, a Spaniard born,
And by descent came of a noble house ;
Though for the love I bear to secret arts,
I never car'd to seek for vain estate,
Yet by my skill I have increas'd my wealth.
My name Castiliano, and my birth
No baser than the best blood of Castile.
Hearing your daughter's strange infirmity,
Join'd with such matchless beauty and rare virtue,
I cross'd the seas on purpose for her good.

Dunstan.

Fond man, presuming on thy weaker skill,
That think'st by art to over-rule the heavens !
Thou know'st not what it is thou undertak'st.
No, no, my lord, your daughter must be cur'd
By fasting, prayer, and religious works ;
Myself for her will sing a solemn mass,
And give her three sips of the holy chalice,
And turn my beads with aves and with creeds ;
And thus, my lord, your daughter must be help'd.

Castiliano.

Zounds, what a prating keeps the bald-pate friar !
My lord, my lord, here's church-work for an age !
Tush, I will cure her in a minute's space,
That she shall speak as plain as you or I.

[*Dunstan's harp sounds on the wall.*]

Forrest.

Forrest.

Hark, hark, my lord, the holy abbot's harp
Sounds by itself so hanging on the wall!

Dunstan.

Unhallowed man, that scorn'st the sacred read¹⁰,
Hark how the testimony of my truth
Sounds heavenly music with an angel's hand,
To testify Dunstan's integrity,
And prove thy active boast of no effect.

Castiliano.

Trush, sir, that music was to welcome me!
The harp hath got another master now;
I warrant you, 'twill never tune you more.

Dunstan.

Who should be master of my harp but I?

Castiliano.

Try then what service it will do for you.

[*He tries to play, but cannot.*]

Dunstan.

Thou art some forcerer or necromancer,
Who by thy spells dost hold these holy strings.

Castiliano.

Cannot your holiness unbind the bonds?
Then, I perceive, my skill is most of force.
You see, my lord, the abbot is but weak;
I am the man must do your daughter good.

Morgan.

What wilt thou ask for to work thy cure?

Castiliano.

That without which I will not do the cure,
Herself to be my wife; for which intent
I came from Spain: then if she shall be mine,
Say so, or keep her else for ever dumb.

Morgan.

The earl of Kent, mine honourable friend,
Hath to my daughter been a suitor long;
And much it would displease both her and him

¹⁰ — *sacred read*] See 42, note to Gammer Gurton's Needle, vol. 2.
p. 32.

202 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

To be prevented of their wished love :
Ask what thou wilt beside, and I will grant it.

Castiliano.

Alas, my lord, what should the crazy earl
Do with so young a virgin as your daughter ?
I dare stand to her choice 'twixt him and me.

Lacy.

And I will pawn mine earldom with my love,
And lose them both, if I lose Honorea.

Castiliano.

A match, my lords ! We'll stand unto the choice.

Morgan.

I am contented, if the earl be pleased.

Lacy.

I were not worthy of her did I doubt.

Castiliano.

Then there it goes ; fetch me a bowl of wine,
This is the match, my lord, before I work ;
If she refuse the earl, she must be mine.

Morgan.

It is.

[*One brings him a cup of wine, he strains the juice of
the herb into it.*]

Castiliano.

Now shall your lordships see a Spaniard's skill,
Who from the plains of new America
Can find out sacred simples of esteem
To bind and unbind nature's strongest powers.
This herb, which mortal men have seldom found,
Can I with ease procure me when I list ;
And by this juice shall Honorea speak.
Here, lady, drink the freedom of thy heart :
And may it teach thee long to call me love ! [*She drinks.*]
Now, lovely Honorea, thou art free,
Let thy celestial voice make choice of me.

Honorea.

Base alien ! mercenary fugitive !
Presumptuous Spaniard ! that with shameless pride
Darest ask an English lady for thy wife.
I scorn my slave should honour thee so much ;

And

And for myself, I like myself the worse
 That thou dar'st hope the gaining of my love.
 Go, get thee gone, the shame of my esteem,
 And seek some drudge that may be like thyself!
 But as for you, good earl of Kent,
 Methinks your lordship, being of these years,
 Should be past dreaming of a second wife.
 Fy, fy, my lord! 'tis lust in doting age;
 I will not patronize so foul a sin.
 An old man dote on youth! 'tis monstrous:
 Go home, go home, and rest your weary head;
 'Twere pity such a brow should learn to bud.
 And lastly unto you, my lord, and father,
 Your love to me is too much overseen,
 That in your care and counsel should devise,
 To tie your daughter's choice to two such grooms.
 You may elect for me, but I'll dispose
 And fit myself far better than both those;
 And so I will conclude; you, as you please.

[Exit Honorea in a chaise]

Robin Goodfellow.

Call you this making of a woman speak?
 I think they all wish she were dumb again.

Castiliano.

How now, my lord, what are you in a muse?

Lacy.

I would to God her tongue were tied again.

Castiliano.

Ay marry, fir, but that's another thing;
 The devil cannot tie a woman's tongue;
 I would the friar could do that with his beads.
 But 'tis no matter; you, my lord have promis'd,
 If she refuse the earl, she should be mine.

Morgan.

Win her, and wear her, man, with all my heart!

Castiliano.

Oh! I'll haunt her, till I make her stoop;
 Come, come, my lord, this was to try her voice;
 Let's in and court her; one of us shall speed.

Robin

Robin Goodfellow.

Happy man ¹¹ be his dole that misseeth her, say I.

Dunstan.

My weaker senses cannot apprehend
The means this stranger us'd to make her speak ;
There is some secret mystery therein,
Conceal'd from Dunstan ; which the Heavens reveal,
That I may scourge this bold blaspheming man,
Who holds religious works of little worth !

[*Exeunt ; manent Clinton and Forrest.*

Forrest.

Now, captain Clinton, what think you of me ?

Clinton.

Methinks, as yet, the jest holds pretty well ;
The one hath taught her to deny himself,
The other woo'd so long he cannot speed.

Forrest.

This news will please young Musgrave.

Clinton.

Marry will it,
And I will hasten to acquaint him with them :
Come let's away.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Parson Shortbosc, and Grim the Collier.

Grim.

No, Mr. Parson, grief hath made my heart and me a
pair of balance, as heavy as lead ; every night I dream I
am a town top, and that I am whipt up and down with
the scourge-stick of love, and the metal of affection ;
and when I wake ¹², I find myself stark naked, and as
cold as a stone ; now judge how I am tumbled and tost ;
poor Grim the collier hath wish'd himself burnt up
amongst his coals.

Shortbosc.

O Grim, be wise, dream not of love !
Thy sorrows cannot Fancy move :

¹¹ *Happy man be his dole.*] See Note to Damon and Pithias, vol. 1.

¹² *Wake.*] Former edition reads *work*. S. P.

GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON. 205

If Jug love thee, love her again ;
If not, thy kindness then refrain.

Grim.

I am not skill'd in your rhyming, Mr. Parson ; but that which is bred in the flesh will never come out of the bone ; I have seen as much as another man ; my travel should teach me ; there's never a day in the week but I carry coals from Croydon to London ; and now when I rise in the morning to harness my horses, and load my cart, methinks I have a taylor sowing stitches in my heart : when I am driving my cart, my heart that wanders one way, my eyes they leer another, my feet they lead me I know not whither, but now and then into a slough over head and ears ; so that poor Grim, that before was over shoes in love, is now over head and ears in dirt and mire.

Shorthose.

Well, Grim, my counsel shall suffice
To help thee ; but in any wise
Be rul'd by me, and thou shalt see,
As thou lov'st her, she shall love thee.

Grim.

A lard ! but do you think that will be so ? I should laugh till I tickle to see that day, and forswear sleep all the next night after. Oh Mr. Parson, I am so halter'd in affection, that I may tell you in secret, here's no body else hears me, I take no care how I fill my sacks ; every time I come to London my coals are found faulty ; I have been five times pilloried, my coals given to the poor, and my sacks burnt before my face. It were a shame to speak this ; but truth will come to light. O Joan ! thou hast thrown the coal-dust of thy love into my eyes, and stricken me quite blind.

Shorthose.

Now afore God the Collier chuseth well ;
For beauty, Jug doth bear away the bell ;
And I love her ; then, Collier, thou must miss,
For parson Shorthose vows, Jug shall be his.
But hear'st thou, Grim, I have that in my head,
To plot that how thou shalt the maiden wed.

Grim.

206 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

Grim.

But are you sure you have that in your head? O for a hammer to knock that out! one blow at your pate would lay all open to me, and make me as wise as you.

Short hose.

Think'st thou I do so often look
For nothing on my learned book,
As that I cannot work the feat?
I warrant I'll the miller cheat;
And make Jug thine, in spite of him:
Will this content thee, neighbour Grim?

Grim.

Content me! ay, and so highly, that if you do this feat for me, you hire me to you as one hireth an ox or an ass: to use, to ride, to spur, or any thing; yours to demand, miserable Grim! Joan's handmaid! for so I have called myself, ever since last May-day, when she gave me her hand to kifs.

Short hose.

Well, let's away; and in all haste,
About it ere the day be past;
And ever after, if thou hast her,
Acknowledge me to be thy master.

Grim.

I wool, sir; come, let's away, the best drink in Croydon's yours; I have it for you, even a dozen of jugs, to Jug's health.

[*Exeunt both.*]

Enter Earl Morgan, Earl Lacy, Marian.

Morgan.

My lord of Kent, the latter motion
Doth bind me to you in a higher degree
Than all those many favours gone before;
And now the issue of my help relies
Only on Mariana's gentleness,
Who, if she will, in such a common good,
Put to her helping hand, the match is made.

Lacy.

You need not make a doubt of Marian,

Whose

Whose love unto her lady were enough,
 Besides her cousin's and her own consent,
 To move her to a greater thing than this.

Marian.

My lords, if aught there be in Marian,
 That may or pleasure you, or profit her,
 Ye shall not need to doubt of my consent.

Morgan.

Gramercy, Marian ; and indeed the thing
 Is, in itself, a matter of no moment,
 If it be weigh'd aright ; and therefore this,
 Thou know'st the bargain 'twixt me and the doctor,
 Concerning marriage with my only daughter,
 Whom I determined that my lord of Kent
 Should have espoused : but I see her mind
 Is only set upon thy cousin Musgrave,
 And in her marriage to use constraint
 Were bootless ; therefore thus we have devised :
 Lord Lacy is content to lose his part,
 And to resign his title to young Musgrave.
 But now the doctor will not yield his right.
 Thus we determine to beguile his hopes :
 Thou shalt this night be brought unto his bed
 Instead of her, and he shall marry thee :
 Musgrave shall have my daughter, she her will,
 And so shall all things sort ¹³ to our content.

Lacy.

And this thou shalt be sure of, Marian,
 The doctor's wealth will keep thee royally ;
 Besides, thou shalt be ever near thy friends,
 That will not see thee wrong'd by any man.
 Say then, wilt thou resolve to marry him ?

¹³ *And so shall all things sort to our content.] Sort is, so happen in the issue. Ben Jonson's New Inn, A. 4. S. 4.*

" — you knew well

" It could not sort with any reputation

" Of mine."

Massinger's Maid of Honour. A. 2. S. 1.

" All sorts to my wishes."

Marian.

Marian.

My lords, you know I am but young ;
 The doctor's fit for one of riper years ;
 Yet, in regard of Honorea's good,
 My cousin's profit, and all your contents,
 I yield myself to be the doctor's wife.

Morgan.

'Tis kindly spoken, gentle Marian :

Enter Castiliano.

But here the doctor comes.

Lacy.

Then I'll away,
 Lest he suspect aught by my being here.

[*Exit.**Morgan.*

Do, and let me alone to close with him.

Castiliano.

May he ne'er speak, that makes a woman speak !
 She talks now sure for all the time that's past.
 Her tongue is like a scare-crow in a tree,
 That clatters still with every puff of wind.
 I have so haunted her from place to place,
 About the hall, from thence into the parlour,
 Up to the chamber, down into the garden ;
 And still she rails, and chafes, and scolds,
 As if it were the sessions-day in hell.
 Yet will I haunt her with an open mouth,
 And never leave her till I force her love me.

Morgan.

Now, master doctor ; what, a match or no ?

Castiliano.

A match, quoth you ? I think the devil himself
 Cannot match her ; for if he could, I should.

Morgan.

Well, be content ; 'tis I must work the mean
 To make her yield whether she will or no.
 My lord of Kent is gone hence in a chafe,
 And now I purpose that she shall be yours ;
 Yet to herself unknown : for she shall think
 That Musgrave is the man, but it shall be you.
 Seem you still discontented, and no more.

Go,

GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON. 209

Go, Mariana, call thy mistress hither.
Now when she comes, dissemble what you know,
And go away, as if you car'd not for her ;
So will she the sooner be brought into it. [Exit Mariana.
Castiliano.

My lord, I thank you for your honest care ;
And, as I may, will study to requite it.

Enter Honorea and Marian.

But here your daughter comes. No, no, my lord,
'Tis not her favour I regard ¹⁴, nor her ;
Your promise 'tis I challenge, which I'll have :
It was my bargain. No man else should have her :
Not that I love her, but I'll not be wrong'd
By any one, my lord ; and so I leave you.

[Exit Castiliano.

Morgan.

He's passing cunning to deceive himself ;
But all the better for the after-sport.

Honorea.

Sir, did you send for me ?

Morgan.

Honorea, for thee.

And this it is : Howe'er unworthily
I have bestowed my love so long upon thee,
That wilt so manifestly contradict me ;
Yet, that thou may'st perceive how I esteem thee,
I make thyself the guardian of thy love,
That thine own fancy may make choice for thee.
I have persuaded with my lord of Kent,
To leave to love thee. Now the peevish doctor
Swears, that his int'rest he will ne'er resign ;
Therefore we must by policy deceive him.
He shall suppose he lieth this night with thee ;
But Mariana shall supply thy room ;
And thou with Musgrave, in another chamber,
Shalt secretly be lodg'd. When this is done,
'Twill be too late to call that back again ;
So shalt thou have thy mind, and he a wife.

¹⁴ 'Tis not her favour I regard.] Former edition,

" 'Tis not for favour I regard."

Honorea.

But wilt thou, Mariana, yield to this?

Marian.

For your sake, lady, I will undertake it.

Honorea.

Gramercy, Marian; and my noble father,
Now I acknowledge that indeed you love me.

Morgan.

Well, no more words; but be you both prepar'd:
The night draweth on; and I have sent in secret
For Musgrave, that he may be brought unseen,
To hide suspicion from their jealous eyes.

Honorea.

I warrant you. Come, Marian, let us go.

[Exeunt Honorea and Marian.]

Morgan.

And then my lord of Kent shall be my son.
Should I go wed my daughter to a boy?
No, no; young girls must have their wills restrain'd;
For if the rule be theirs all runs to nought. *[Exit.]*

Enter Clack the miller, with Joan.

Clack.

Be not Jug, as a man would say, finer than five-pence,
or more proud than a peacock; that is, to seem to scorn
to call in at Clack's mill, as you pass over the bridge.
There be as good wenches as you, be glad to pay me toll.

Joan.

Like enough, Clack; I had as live they as I, and a
great deal rather too. You that take toll of so many
maids, shall never toll me after you. Oh god! what a
dangerous thing it is but to peep once into love! I was
never so haunted with my harvest-work as I am with love's
passions.

Clack.

Ay but, Joan, bear old proverbs in your memory; Soft
and fair; now, sir, if you make too much haste to fall
foul, ay, and that upon a foul one too, there fades the
flower of all Croydon. Tell me but this: Is not Clack
the miller as good a name as Grim the collier?

GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON. 211

Joan.

Alas, I know no difference in names,
To make a maid, or choose, or to refuse.

Clack.

You were best to say no, nor in men neither. Well, I'll
be sworn I have; but I have no reason to tell you so much,
that care so little for me: yet hark.

[Clack speaketh in her ear.]

Enter Grim and Parson Shorthose.

Grim.

O, Mr. Parson, there he stands like a scare-crow, to drive
me away from her that sticks as close to my heart as my
shirt to my back, or my hose to my heel. O, Mr. Parson
Shorthose, Grim is but a man as another man is. Colliers
have but lives as other men have. All is gone, if she go
from me: Grim is nobody without her. My heart is in
my mouth; my mouth is in my hand; my hand threatens
vengeance against the miller; as it were a beadle with a
whip in his hand, triumphing o'er a beggar's back!

Shorthose.

Be silent, Grim; stand close, and see;
So shall we know how all things be.

Grim.

In wisdom I am appeas'd, but in anger I broil as it were
a rasher upon the coals.

Joan.

I'll not despise the trades ye either have;
Yet Grim, the collier, may, if he be wise,
Live even as merry as the day is long.
For, in my judgment, in his mean estate
Consists as much content as in more wealth.

Grim.

O, Mr. Parson, write down this sweet saying of her in
Grim's commendations. She hath made my heart leap
like a hobby-horse! O, Joan, this speech of thine will
I carry with me even to my grave.

Shorthose.

Be silent then.

Clack.

Well then, I perceive you mean to lead your life in a coal-pit, like one of the devil's drudges; and have your face look like the outward side of an old iron pot, or a blacking-box.

Grim.

He calleth my trade into question, I cannot forbear him.

Shortbosc.

Nay, then you spoil all, neighbour Grim; I warrant you she will answer him.

Joan.

What I intend I am not bound to shew
To thee, nor any other but my mother,
To whom in duty I submit myself;
Yet this I tell thee, Though my birth be mean,
My honest virtuous life shall help to mend it;
And if I marry any in all this life,
He shall say boldly, he hath an honest wife.

Grim.

O that it were my fortune to light upon her, on condition my horses were dead, and my cart broken, and I bound to carry coals as long as I live from Croydon to London on my bare shoulders! Mr. Parson, the flesh is frail; he shall tempt her no longer; she is but weak, and he is the stronger; I'll upon him. Miller, thou art my neighbour; and therein charity holds my hands; but methinks you, having a water-gap of your own, you may do as other millers do, grind your grist at home, knock your coggs into your own mill; you shall not cogg with her.

She doth discry thee;

And I defy thee,

To a mortal fight;

And so, miller, good night.

And now, sweet Joan,

Be it openly known thou art my own.

Clack.

Well, Grim, since thou art so collier-like choleric —

Grim.

Miller, I will not be mealy mouth'd.

GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON. 213

Clack.

I'll give thee the fewer words now, because the next time we meet I'll pay thee all in dry blows. Carry coals¹⁵ at a collier's hands! if I do, let my mill be drown'd up in water, and I hang'd in the roof.

Joan.

And if thou lov'st me, Grim, forbear him now.

Grim.

If I love thee! dost thou doubt of that? nay, rip me up, and look into my heart, and thou shalt see thy own face pictured there as plainly as in the proudest looking-glass in all Croydon; if I love thee! then tears gush out, and shew my love.

Clack.

What, Mr. Parson, are you there? you remember you promis'd to win Joan for my own wearing?

Shorthose.

I warrant thee, Clack; but now begone;
Leave me to work that here alone.

Clack.

Well, farewell, Mr. Shorthose; be true when you are trusted.

[*Exit Clack.*]

Shorthose.

She shall be neither his nor thine,
For I intend to make her mine.

Grim.

If I love thee, Joan! Those very words are a purgation to me. You shall see desperation in my face, and death marching in my very countenance. If I love!

Shorthose.

What, Grim, hath grief drown'd thee at last?
Are all thy joys overcast?
Is Joan in place, and thou so fad!
Her presence, man, should make thee glad.

¹⁵ *Carry coals*] It is observed by Dr. Warburton (note on *Romeo and Juliet*, A. 1. S. 1.) that to carry coals was a phrase formerly in use, to signify bearing of injuries; and Dr. Percy has given several instances in proof of it. To those may be added the following, *Ben Jonson's Every Man out of his Humour*, A. 5. S. 3. "Take heed, Sir Puntarvolo, what you do; he'll bear no coals, I can tell you (o' my word.)"

Joan.

Good Mr. Parson, 'twas no fault of mine ;
 He takes occasion where there none was given.
 I will not blab unto the world, my love
 I owe to him, and shall do whilst I live.

*[Aside.**Grim.*

Well, Joan, without all ifs or ands, e-perfese, a-perfese,
 or tittle-tattles in the world, I do love thee ; and so much,
 that in thy absence I cry when I see thee, and rejoice with
 my very heart when I cannot behold thee.

Shorthose.

No doubt, no doubt, thou lov'st her well.
 But listen now to what I tell ;
 Since ye are both so well agreed,
 I wish you make more haste than speed.
 To-morrow is Holy-rood day,
 When all a nutting take their way ;
 Within the wood a clove doth stand,
 Incompass'd round on either hand
 With trees and bushes ; there will I
 Dispatch your marriage presently.

Grim.

O, Mr. Parson, your devising pate hath blest'd me for
 ever ; Joan, we'll have that so ; the shorter the work, the
 sweeter.

Joan.

And if my mother give but her consent,
 My absence shall in no case hinder it.

Grim.

She ! quotha, she is mine already ; we'll to her pre-
 sently. Mr. Parson, 'tis a match ; we'll meet you. Now,
 miller, do I go beyond you ; I have stripp'd him of the
 wench, as a cook would strip an eel out of her skin, or a
 pudding out of the case thereof. Now I talk of a pudding,
 O 'tis my only food, I am an old dog at it. Come, Joan,
 let us away, I'll pudding you.

Shorthose.

Well, if my fortune luckily ensue,
 As you shall cozen him, I'll cozen you.

*[Exeunt.
 Enter*

GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON. 215

Enter Castiliano at one door with Marian, Earl Lacy at another door with Honorea.

Castiliano.

Come, lovely Honorea, bright as day,
As came Alcmena from her sacred bed,
With Jupiter, shap'd like Amphitryon ;
So shew my love.

Honorea.

My love ! whom have we here ? Sweet Musgrave !
but alas I am betray'd !

Castiliano

Thou art my love.

Lacy.

No, mine.

Honorea.

Nor yours, nor yours ;
But Musgrave's love : O, Musgrave, where art thou ?

Lacy.

Be not displeas'd, my dear ; give me thy hand.

Honorea.

Thy hand, false earl ! nor hand nor heart of mine :
Could'st thou thus cunningly deceive my hopes ?
And could my father give consent thereto ?
Well, neither he, nor thou, shalt force my love.

Castiliano.

'Tis I, fair Honorea, am thy love ;
Forfake the worthless earl, give me thy hand.

Marian.

Whose hand would you have, sir ? this hand is mine,
And mine is yours ; then keep you to your own :
Yet are you mine, sir, and I mean to keep you.
What, do you think to shake me off so soon ?
No, gentle husband, now 'tis too too late ;
You should have look'd before you came to bed.

Enter Robin Goodfellow with his master's gown.

Robin.

Many good-morrows to my gentle master,
And my new mistress, God give you both joy ;
What say you to your gown, sir, this cold morning ?

P 4

Castiliano.

Castiliano.

Robin, I am undone, and cast away!

Robin.

How, master, cast away upon a wife?

Castiliano.

Yea, Robin, cast away upon a wife.

Robin.

Cast her away then, master, can you not?

Marian.

No, fir, he cannot, nor he shall not do it.

Robin.

Why, how know you? I am sure you are not she.

Marian.

Yes, fir, I am your mistress, as it falls.

Robin.

As it falls, quoth ye, marry a foul fall is it.

Marian.

Base rascal, dost thou say that I am foul?

Robin.

No; it was foul play for him to fall upon you.

Marian.

How know you that he fell? were you so nigh?

[She giveth Robin a box on the ear.]

Robin.

Mass, it should seem it was he that fell if any;
For you, methinks, are of a mounting nature:
What, at my ears at first! a good beginning.

Lacy.

My dear delight, why dost thou stain thy cheeks,
Those rosy beds, with this unseemly dew?
Shake off those tears, that now untimely fall;
And smile on me, that am thy summer's joy.

Honorea.

Hapless am I to lose so sweet a prison,
Thus to obtain a weary liberty.
Happy had I been so to have remain'd,
Of which estate I ne'er should have complain'd.

Robin.

Whoop, whoo! more marriages! and all of a sort;
happy are they, I see, that live without them: if this be
the beginning, what will be the ending?

Enter

Enter earl Morgan and Dunstan.

Morgan.

Look, Dunstan, where they be; displeas'd, no doubt :
Try if thou canst work reconciliation.

Castiliano.

My Lord, I challenge you of breach of promise,
And claim your daughter here to be my wife.

Lacy.

Your claim is nought, fir; she is mine already.

Honorea.

Your claim is nought, fir; I am none of yours.

Marian.

Your claim is here, fir; Marian is yours.
What, husband, newly married, and inconstant !
'Greed we so well together all this night,
And must we now fall out ? for shame, for shame ?
A man of your years, and be so unstay'd !
Come come away, there may no other be ;
I will have you, therefore you shall have me.

Robin.

This is the bravest country in the world,
Where men get wives whether they will or no ;
I trow ere long some wench will challenge me.

Castiliano.

Oh ! is not this a goodly consequence ;
I must have her, because she will have me ?

Dunstan.

Ladies and gentlemen, hear Dunstan speak.
Marriage, no doubt, is ordain'd by providence ;
Is sacred ; not to be, by vain affect,
Turn'd to the idle humours of mens brains :
Besides, for you, my lady Honorea,
Your duty binds you to obey your father,
Who better knows what fits you than yourself ;
And 'twere, in you, great folly to neglect
The earl's great love, whereof you are unworthy,
Should you but seem offended with the match ;
Therefore submit yourself to make amends ;
For 'tis your fault ; so may you all be friends.

Morgan.

And, daughter, you must think what I have done

Was

218 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

Was for your good, to wed you to the earl,
Who will maintain and love you royally :
For what had Musgrave but his idle shape ?
A shadow, to the substance you must build on.

Robin.

She will build substances on him I trow ;
Who keeps a shrew against her will, had better let her go.

Marian.

Madam, conceal your grief, and seem content ;
For, as it is, you must be rul'd per force ;
Dissemble till convenient time may serve
To think on this despite and Musgrave's love.

Lacy.

Tell me, my dear, wilt thou at length be pleas'd ?

Honorea.

As good be pleas'd, my lord, as not be eas'd ;
Yet though my former love did move me much,
Think not amiss, the same love may be yours.

Castiliano.

What ! is it a match ? nay then, since you agree,
I cannot mend myself, for aught I see ;
And therefore 'tis as good to be content.
Come, lady, 'tis your lot to be my dame.
Lordings, adieu ; God send you all good speed ;
Some have their wives for pleasure, some for need.

Lacy.

Adieu, Castiliano ; are we friends ?

Castiliano.

Yes, yes, my lord, there is no remedy.

Robin.

No remedy, my masters, for a wife !
A note for young beginners, mark it well.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Forrest, captain Clinton, Harvey.

Forrest.

Now, gallants, what imagine you of this ?
Our noses are all slit ; for Mariana,
The Spanish doctor hath her to his wife ;
And Musgrave's hopes are dead for Honorea,
For she is married to the earl of Kent :

'Twill

'Twill be good sport to see them when they rise,
If so they be not gotten up already.

Clinton.

I say the devil go with them all, for me;
The Spanish doctor marry Marian!
I think that slave was born to cross me still;
Had it not been last day before the earl,
Upon my conscience I had crack'd his crown,
When first he ask'd the lady for his wife;
Now he hath got her too, whom I desir'd.
Why, he'll away with her ere long to Spain,
And keep her there to dispossess our hopes.

Forrest.

No, I can comfort you for that suppose;
For yesterday he hir'd a dwelling-house,
And here he means to tarry all this year,
So long at least, whate'er he doth hereafter.

Clinton.

A sudden plat-form comes into my mind,
And this it is: Miles Forrest, thou and I
Are partly well acquainted with the doctor.
Ralph Harvey shall along with us to him;
Him we'll prefer for his apothecary:
Now, sir, when Ralph and he are once acquainted,
His wife may often come unto his house,
Either to see his garden, or such like;
For, doubt not, women will have means enough,
If they be willing, as I hope she will;
There may we meet her, and let each one plead;
He that speeds best, why let him carry it.

Forrest.

I needs must laugh, to think how all we three,
In the contriving of this feat, agree;
But, having got her, every man will strive
How each may other of her love deprive.

Clinton.

Tut, Forrest, love admits these friendly strifes;
But say, how like you of my late device?

Forrest.

Surpassing well, but let's about it streight;

220 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

Left he, before our coming, be provided.

Clinton.

Agreed.

Enter Musgrave and Marian.

[*Exeunt.*

Musgrave.

Tush, cousin, tell not me ; but this device
Was long ago concluded 'twixt you two !
Which divers reasons move me to imagine ;
And therefore these are toys to blind my eyes,
To make me think she only loved me,
And yet is married to another man.

Marian.

Why, cousin Musgrave, are your eyes so blind,
You cannot see the truth of that report ?
Did you not know, my lord was always bent,
Whatever came, to wed her to the earl ?
And have you not, besides, heard the device
He us'd to marry her against her will ?
Betray'd, poor soul, unto earl Lacy's bed,
She thought she held young Musgrave in her arms !
Her morning tears might testify her thoughts ;
Yet thou shalt see she loves thee more than him,
And thou shalt taste the sweets of her delights.
Mean time my house shall be thy mansion,
And thy abode, for thither will she come :
Use thou that opportunity, and try
Whether she lov'd thee, or did but dissemble.

Musgrave.

If she continue kind to me hereafter,
I shall imagine well of her and you.

Enter Castiliano.

Castiliano.

Now, dame, in talk ! what gentleman is this ?

Mariana.

My cousin Musgrave, husband, comes to see you.

Castiliano.

Musgrave, now on my faith heartily welcome :
Give me thy hand, my cousin, and my friend,
My partner in the loss of Honorea ;

We two must needs be friends, our fortune's like :
Marry, yet I am richer by a shrew.

Marian.

'Tis better to be a shrew, fir, than a sheep ;
You have no cause, I hope, yet to complain.

Castiliano.

No, dame ; for yet you know 'tis honey-moon ;
What ! we have scarcely fettled our acquaintance.

Mysgrave.

I doubt not, cousin, but ye shall agree ;
For she is mild enough if she be pleas'd.

Castiliano.

So is the devil, they say ; yea, cousin, yea,
My dear and I, I doubt not, shall agree.

Enter Robin.

Robin.

Sir, here be two or three gentlemen at the door
Would gladly speak a word with your worship.

Enter Clinton, Forrest, Harvey.

They need no bidding, methinks ; they can come alone.

Clinton.

God save you, signior Castiliano.

Castiliano.

O captain, come sta ¹⁶ ? welcome all, my friends !

Forrest.

Sir, we are come to bid God give you joy,
And see your house.

Mariana.

Welcome, gentlemen :

'Tis kindly done to come to see us here.

Robin.

This kindness makes me fear my master's head :
Such hot-spurs must have game, howe'er they get it.

Clinton.

We have a suit to you, Castiliano.

Castiliano.

What is it fir ? if it lies in me, 'tis done.

¹⁶ Come sta ? } The Italian for *How do you do ?*

Clinton.

Nay, but a trifle, fir; and that is,
This same young man, by trade apothecary,
Is willing to retain unto your cures.

Castiliano.

Marry, with all my heart, and welcome too!
What may I call your name, my honest friend?

Harvey.

Ralph Harvey, fir; your neighbour here hard by.
The golden lion is my dwelling-place,
Where what you please shall be with care perform'd.

Castiliano.

Gramercies, Harvey! welcome, all my friends!
Let's in, and hanſel our new mansion-house
With a carouſing round of Spaniſh wine.
Come, couſin Muſgrave, you ſhall be my gueſt;
My dame, I trow, will welcome you herſelf.

Marian.

No, boy, lord Lacy's wife ſhall welcome thee.

Robin.

So now the game begins, here's ſome cheer toward;
I muſt be ſkinker then²⁷, let me alone;
They all ſhall want, ere Robin ſhall have none.

[*Exeunt omnes niſi Clin. & Har.*

²⁷ *I muſt be ſkinker then.*] *Skinker* was a tapſter or drawer. Prince Henry, in the firſt part of Henry IV. A. 2. S. 4. ſpeaks of an *under-skinker*, meaning an *under-drawer*. Mr. Steevens ſays, it is derived from the Dutch word *ſchenken*, which ſignifies to fill a cup or glaſs. So in *G. Fletcher's Ruſſe Commonwealth*, 1591. p. 13. ſpeaking of a town built on the ſouth-side of Moſkoa, by Baſilius the emperor, for a garrifon of ſoldiers, "to whom he gave priviledge to drinke mead and beer, at the drye or prohibited times, when other Ruſſes may drinke nothing but water, and for that cauſe called this newe citie by the name of Naloi, that is *Skink* or *poure in*."

Marſton's Sophoniſba. A. 5. S. 2.

"Ore whelme me not with ſweets, let me not drink,

"Till my breast burſt, O Jove, thy nectar *ſinker*."

Ben Jonſon's Poetaſter, A. 4. S. 5.

Alb. "I'll ply the table with nectar, and make 'em friends.

Her. "Heaven is like to have but a lame *ſinker*."

Ben Jonſon's Bartholomew Fair, A. 2. S. 2.

"Froth your cans well i' the filling, at length, rogue, and jog your bottles o' the buttock, firrah; then *ſink* out the firſt glaſs ever, and drink with all companies."

Clinton.

Clinton.

Sirrah, Ralph Harvey, now the entry is made,
Thou only hast access without suspect ¹⁸.
Be not forgetful of thy agent here,
Remember Clinton was the man that did it.

Harvey.

Why, captain, now you talk in jealousy.
Do not misconstrue my true-meaning heart.

Clinton.

Ralph, I believe thee, and rely on thee.
Do not too long absent thee from the doctor.
Go in, carouze, and taint his Spanish brain;
I'll follow, and my Marian's health maintain.

Harvey.

Captain, you well advise me; I'll go in,
And for myself my love-suits I'll begin.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Robin Goodfellow with his head broken.

Robin.

THE devil himself take all such dames for me!
Zounds, I had rather be in hell than here;
Nay, let him be his own man if he list,
Robin means not to stay to be us'd thus.
The very first day, in her angry spleen,
Her nimble hand began to greet my ears
With such unkind salutes as I ne'er felt.
And since that time there hath not pass'd an hour,
Wherein she hath not either rail'd upon me,
Or laid her anger's load upon my limbs.
Even now (for no occasion in the world,
But as it pleas'd her ladyship to take it)

¹⁸ *Suspect.*] Suspicion. See note to Marlow's *Edward the Second*, vol. 2.

224 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

She gat me up a staff, and breaks my head.
 But I'll no longer serve so curs'd a dame,
 I'll run as far first as my legs will bear me.
 What shall I do? to hell I dare not go,
 Until my master's twelve months be expir'd ;
 And here to stay with mistress Marian,
 Better to be so long in purgatory.
 Now, farewell, master ! but, shrewd dame, farewell !
 I'll leave you, though the devil is with you still.

[Exit Robin.

Enter Marian alone, chafing.

Marian.

My heart still pants within ; I am so chaf't !
 The rascal slave my man, that sneaking rogue,
 Had like to have undone us all for ever !
 My cousin Musgrave is with Honorea,
 Set in an arbour in the summer garden ;
 And he, forsooth, must needs go in for herbs,
 And told me further, that his master bid him ;
 But I laid hold upon my youngker's pate,
 And made the blood run down about his ears.
 I trow he shall ask me leave ere he go.
 Now is my cousin master of his love,
 The lady at one time reveng'd and pleas'd :
 So speed they all, that marry maids perforce !

Enter Castiliano.

But here my husband comes.

Castiliano.

What, dame, alone ?

Marian.

Yes, sir, this once, for want of company.

Castiliano.

Why, where's my lady, and my cousin Musgrave ?

Marian.

You may go look them both for aught I know.

Castiliano.

What, are you angry, dame ?

Marian.

Yea, so it seems.

Castiliano.

Castiliano.

What is the cause, I pr'ythee?

Marian.

Why would you know?

Castiliano.

That I might ease it, if it lay in me.

Marian.

O, but it belongs not to your trade.

Castiliano.

You know not that.

Marian.

I know you love to prate, and so I leave you.

[*Exit Marian.*]

Castiliano.

Well, go thy way; oft have I raked hell
To get a wife, yet never found her like.
Why this it is to marry with a shrew.
Yet, if it be, as I presume it is,
There's but one thing offends both her and me;
And I am glad if that be it offends her.
'Tis so, no doubt; I read it in her brow.
Lord Lacy shall, with all my heart, enjoy
Fair Honorea: Marian is mine;
Who, though she be a shrew, yet is she honest.
So is not Honorea: for even now,
Walking within my garden all alone,
She came with Musgrave, stealing closely by,
And follows him that seeks to fly from her.
I spy'd this all unseen, and left them there.
But sure my dame hath some conceit thereof,
And therefore she is thus angry, honest soul!
Well, I'll strait hence unto my lord of Kent,
And warn him watch his wife from these close meetings.
Well, Marian, thou liv'st yet free from blame:
Let ladies go, thou art the devil's dame.

[*Exit Castiliano.*]

Enter the Devil, like Musgrave, with Honorea.

Musgrave.

No, lady; let thy modest, virtuous life

Be always joined with thy comely shape,
For lust eclipseth nature's ornament.

Honoria.

Young heady boy, think'st thou thou shalt recal
Thy long-made love, which thou so oft hast sworn
Making my maiden-thoughts to doat on thee.

Musgrave.

With patience hear me, and if what I say
Shall jump with reason¹⁹, then you'll pardon me.
The time hath been when my soul's liberty
Vow'd servitude unto that heavenly face,
Whilst both had equal liberty of choice :
But since the holy bond of marriage
Hath left me single, you a wedded wife,
Let me not be the third, unlawfully
To do earl Lacy so foul injury.
But now at last —

Honoria.

I would that last
Might be thy last, thou monster of all men!

Musgrave.

Hear me with patience.

Honoria.

Cease: I'll hear no more;
'Tis my affection, and not reason speaks :
Then, Musgrave, turn the hardness of thy heart,
And now at least incline thy love to mine.

Musgrave.

Nay, now I see thou wilt not be reclaim'd.
Go and bestow this hot love on the earl ;
Let not these loose affects thus scandalize
Your fair report. Go home and learn to live
As chaste as Lucrece, madam. So I leave you.

[*She pulleth him back.*

Honoria.

O stay a little while, and hear my tongue

¹⁹ Shall jump with reason, &c.] See Note to Alexander and Campaspe, vol. 2. p. 100.

Speak my heart's words, which cannot chuse but tell thee,
 Hate the earl, only because I love thee. [*Exit Musgrave.*
 Musgrave, return! hear, Honorea speaks!
 Disdain hath left him wings to fly from me!
 Sweet Love, lend me thy wings to overtake him;
 For I can stay him with kind dalliance!
 All this is but the blindness of my fancy.
 Recal thyself: let not thy honour bleed
 With the foul wounds of infamy and shame.
 My proper home shall call me home again,
 Where my dear lord bewails, as much as I,
 His too much love to her that loves not him.
 Let none hereafter fix her maiden love
 Too firm on any, lest she feel with me
 Musgrave's revolt, and his inconstancy. [*Exit.*

Enter Forrest, with Marian.

Forrest.

Tut, I'll remember thee, and streight return:
 But here's the doctor.

Marian.

Where? Forrest, farewell!
 I would not have him see me for a world:

Forrest.

Why? he is not here; well, now I see you fear him.

Marian.

Marry beshrew thee for thy false alarm!
 I fear him? no, I neither fear nor love him.

Forrest.

But where's my lady? She is gone home before,
 And I must follow after; Marian, farewell.

Marian.

I shall expect your coming.

Forrest.

Presently; and hearest thou, Marian? nay, it shall be
 so. [*He whispers in her ear.*

Marian.

O lord; fir, you are wed, I warrant you;
 We'll laugh, be merry, and it may be kifs;
 But if you look for more, you aim amiss:

Q 2

Forrest.

Forrest.

Go to, go to ! we'll talk of this anon. *[Exit Forrest.]*

Marian.

Well, go thy way, for the true-hearted'st man
That livest, and as full of honesty ;
And yet as wanton as a pretty lamb.
He'll come again, for he hath lov'd me long,
And so have many more besides himself :
But I was coy and proud, as maids are wont,
Meaning to match beyond my mean estate ;
Yet I have favour'd youths, and youthful sports,
Altho' I durst not venture on the main ;
But now it will not be so soon espy'd ;
Maids cannot, but a wife a fault may hide.

Enter Nan.

What, Nan !

Nan.

Anon, forsooth.

Marian.

Come hither, maid !
Here, take my keys, and fetch the galley-pot ;
Bring a fair napkin, and some fruit dishes ;
Dispatch, and make all ready presently ;
Miles Forrest will come streight to drink with me.

Nan.

I will forsooth.

[Exit Nan.]

Marian.

Why am I young but to enjoy my years ?
Why am I fair, but that I should be lov'd ?
And why should I be lov'd, and not love others ?
Tut, she is a fool that her affection smothers :
'Twas not for love I was the doctor's wife,
Nor did he love me when he first was mine ;
Tush, tush, this wife is but an idle name !
I purpose now to try another game.
Art thou return'd so soon ? O 'tis well done.

Enter Nan with the banquet.

And hear'st thou, Nan ; when Forrest shall return,
If any happen to enquire for me,
Whether't be captain Clinton, or Ralph Harvey,

Call

Call presently, and say thy master's come ;
So I'll send Forrest o'er the garden pale.

Nan.

I will, forsooth.

Marian.

Mean time stay thou and make our banquet ready.
I'll to my closet, and be here again,
Before Miles Forrest shall come visit me. [Ex. *Marian.*

Nan.

I wonder what my mistress is about ;
Somewhat she would not have my master know ;
Whate'er it be, 'tis nothing unto me ;
She is my good mistress ; and I'll keep her counsel.
I have oft seen her kiss behind his back ;
And laugh, and toy, when he did little think it :
O what a winking eye the wanton hath
To cozen him, even when he looks upon her !
But what have I to do with what she doth ?
I'll taste her jonkets, since I am alone ;
That which is good for them, cannot hurt me.
Ay, marry, this is sweet ! a cup of wine
Will not be hurtful for digestion.

Enter Castiliano.

Castiliano.

I would I had been wiser once to-day ;
I went on purpose to my lord of Kent,
To give him some good counsel for his wife,
And he, poor heart, no sooner heard my news,
But turns me up his whites, and falls flat down :
There I was fain to rub and chafe his veins,
And much ado we had to get him live ;
But for all that he is extremely sick,
And I am come in all the haste I may
For cordials to keep the earl alive :
But how now, what a banquet ! What means this ?

Nan.

Alas, my master is come home himself !
Mistress, mistress ! my master is come home !

[He stops her mouth.
Castiliano.

230 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

Castiliano.

Peace, you young strumpet, or I'll stop your speech :
Come hither, maid ! tell me, and tell me true,
What means this banquet ? what's your mistress doing ?
Why cam'st thou out, when as thou saw'st me coming ?
Tell me, or else I'll hang thee by the heels,
And whip thee naked : come on, what's the matter ?

Nan.

Forsooth, I cannot tell.

Castiliano.

Can you not tell ? come on, I'll make you tell me.

Nan.

O master ; I will tell you.

Castiliano.

Then say on.

Nan.

Nothing, in truth, forsooth, but that she means
To have a gentleman come drink with her.

Castiliano.

What gentleman ?

Nan.

Forsooth, 'tis Mr. Forrest, as I think.

Castiliano.

Forrest ! nay then I know how the game goeth ;
Whoever loseth, I am sure to win
By their great kindness ; tho't be but the horns ;

Enter Forrest at one door, Marian at another.

But here comes he and she. Come hither, maid ;
Upon thy life give not a word, a look,
That she may know aught of my being here ;
Stand still, and do whate'er she bids thee do.
Go, get thee gone, but if thou dost betray me,
I'll cut thy throat, look to it, for I will do it ;
I'll stand here close to see the end of this ;
And see what rakes she keeps when I'm abroad.

Marian.

'Tis kindly done, Miles, to return so soon,
And so I take it. Nan, is our banquet ready ?
Welcome, my love ! I see you'll keep your word.

Nan

Nan.

'Twere better for you both he had not kept it.

Forrest.

Yea, Mariana, else I were unworthy ;
I did but bring my lady to the door,
And there I left her full of melancholy,
And discontented.

Marian.

Why, 'twas kindly done.
Come, come sit down, and let us laugh a while :
Maid, fill some wine.

Nan.

Alas, my breech makes buttons,
And so would theirs, knew they as much as I.
He may change the sweet-meats, and put
Purging comfits in the dishes.

Marian.

Here's to my lady, and my cousin Musgrave.

Forrest.

I pray remember gentle master doctor,
And good earl Lacy too, among the rest.

Castiliano.

O, fir, we find you kind ! we thank you for it ;
The time may come when we may cry you quit.

Nan.

Master, shall I steal you a cup of wine ?

Castiliano.

Away, you baggage ; hold your peace, you wretch.

Forrest.

But I had rather walk into your orchard,
And see your gallery, so much commended ;
To view the workmanship he brought from Spain,
Wherein's describ'd the banquet of the gods.

Marian.

Ay, there's one piece exceeding lively done ²⁰ ;
Where Mars and Venus lie within a net,
Inclos'd by Vulcan, and he looking on.

²⁰ *Ay, there's, &c.*] Similiar to this description is one in *Marlow's Edward 2d*, A. 1.—See vol. 2.

312 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

Castiliano.

Better and better yet ; 'twill mend anon.

Marian.

Another of Diana with her nymphs,
Bathing their naked bodies in the streams ;
Where fond Acteon, for his eyes' offence,
Is turn'd into a hart's shape, horns and all :
And this the doctor hangs right o'er his bed.

Forrest.

Those horns may fall and light upon his head.

Castiliano.

And if they do, worse luck ; what remedy ?

Forrest.

Nay, Marian, we'll not leave these fights unseen :
And then we'll see your orchard and your fruit ;
For now there hangs queen apples on the trees,
And one of them are worth a score of these.

Marian.

Well, you shall see them, lest you lose your longing.

[*Exeunt Marian and Forrest.*]

Castiliano.

Nay, if ye fall a longing for green fruit,
Child-bearing is not far off, I am sure !
Why this is excellent ; I feel the buds :
My head groweth hard, my horns will shortly spring.
Now who may lead the cuckold's dance but I,
That am become the head man of the parish ?
O ! this it is to have an honest wife,
Of whom so much I boasted once to-day.
Come hither, minx ! you know your mistress's mind,
And you keep secret all her villainies ;
Tell me, you were best, where was this plot devised ?
How did these villains know I was abroad ?

Nan.

Indeed, forsooth, I knew not when it was ;
My mistress call'd me from my work of late,
And bade me lay a napkin ; so I did,
And made this banquet ready : but in truth
I knew not what she did intend to do.

Castiliano.

Castiliano.

No, no, you did not watch against I came,
To give her warning to dispatch her knaves?
You cry'd not out, when as you saw me come?
All this is nothing, but I'll trounce you all.

Nan.

In truth, good master!

Enter Marian, Forrest.

Castiliano.

Peace, stay! they come,
Whimper not; and you do, I'll use you worse.
Behold that wicked strumpet with that knave!
O that I had a pistol for their sakes,
That at one shot I might dispatch them both!
But I must stand close yet, and see the rest.

Marian.

How lik'st thou, Miles, my orchard, and my house?

Forrest.

Well; thou art seated to thy heart's content,
A pleasant orchard, and a house well furnish'd;
There nothing wants; but in the gallery
The painter shews his art exceedingly.

Marian.

Yet is there one thing goeth beyond all these;
Contented life, that giveth the heart his ease;
And that I want.

[*One knocketh at the door.*]

Forrest.

Sweet love, adieu.

[*Exit Forrest.*]

Marian.

Farewell, sweetheart. Who is that at the door?

Enter Clinton.

Clinton.

A Friend.

Marian.

Come near: what, captain, is it you?

Clinton.

Even I, fair Marian, watching carefully
The blessed step of opportunity.

Marian.

Marian.

Good, good ! how fortune gluts me with excess !
Still they that have enough shall meet with more,

Clinton.

But where's the doctor ?

Marian.

Ministring abroad
Physic to some sick patients he retains,

Clinton.

Let him abroad, I'll minister at home
Such physic shall content my Marian.

Castiliano.

O monstrous ! now the world must see my shame ;
This head must bear whatever likes ²¹ my dame,

Marian.

I have no malady requires a cure.

Clinton.

Why, then must I assume a sick man's part,
And all my sickness lieth at my heart ;
'Tis the heart-burning that torments me so !

Marian.

There is no cure for fire but to be quenck'd.

Clinton.

Thou hast prescrib'd a sovereign remedy.

Castiliano.

O who the devil made her a physician ?

Clinton.

Let's not obscure, what love doth manifest ;
Nor let a stranger's bed make thee seem strange
To him that ever lov'd and honour'd thee.

Marian.

A captain made a captive by loose love,
And gadding fancy ; fie, 'twere monstrous shame
That Cupid's bow should blemish Mars's name ;
Take up thy arms, recal thy drooping thoughts ;
And lead thy troops into the spacious fields.

Castiliano.

She counsels others well, if she would take it.

Clinton.

Thou counsellest the blind to lead the blind ;

²¹ *Likes*] See note on *Cornelia*, A. I. See vol. 2.

Can I lead them that cannot guide myself?
Thou, Marian, must release my captive heart.

Marian.

With all my heart, I grant thee free release.

Clinton.

Thou art obscure too much: but tell me, love,
Shall I obtain my long-desired love?

Marian.

Captain, there is yet somewhat in thy mind.
Thou would'st reveal, but wastest utterance;
Thou better knowest to front the braving foe,
Than plead love-suits.

Clinton.

I grant, 'tis even so;
Extremity of passions still are dumb,
No tongue can tell love's chief perfections:
Persuade thyself my love-sick thoughts are thine;
Thou only may'st those drooping thoughts refine.

Marian.

Since at my hands thou seek'st a remedy,
I'll ease thy grief, and cure thy malady;
No drug the doctor hath shall be too dear;
His antidote shall fly to do thee good;
Come in, and let thy eye make choice for thee,
That thou may'st know how dear thou art to me.

[*Exeunt Clinton, Marian.*]

Castiliano.

Is this obedience? now the devil go with them!
And yet I dare not; oh she's mankind grown ²²!

²² ——— [She's mankind grown!] In *Shakspeare's Coriolanus* Sicinius asks Volumnia, "Are you mankind?" on which Dr. Johnson remarks, that "a mankind woman is a woman with the roughness of a man; and, in an aggravated sense, a woman ferocious, violent, and eager to shed blood." Mr. Upton says, mankind means wicked: See his *Remarks on Ben Jonson*, p. 92. The word is frequently used to signify masculine. So in *Love's Cure*; or, *The Martial Maid*, A. 4. S. 3.

"From me, all mankind women learn to wooe.

Dekkar's Satiromastrix.

"—— my wife's a woman; yet

"'Tis more than I know yet, that know not her;

"If she should prove mankind, 'twere rare; fie! fie!"

Massinger's City Madam, A. 2. S. 1.

—— "You brach

"Are you turn'd mankind?"

236 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

O miserable men that must live so,
And damned strumpets, authors of this woe!

Enter Clinton, Marian.

But peace! be still! they come! O shameless shame!
Well may the world call thee the devil's dame,

Marian.

Captain, thy skill hath pleased me so well,
That I have vow'd my service to Bellona.

Castiliano.

Her service to Bellona! turn'd stark ruffian!
She'll be call'd Caveliero Marian.

Clinton.

And I will train thee up in feats of arms,
And teach thee all the orders of the field;
That whilst we, like to Mars and Venus, jest,
The doctor's head may get a gallant crest.

Castiliano.

I can no longer linger my disgrace,
Nor hide my shame from their detested sight.
How now, thou whore, dishonour to my bed!
Disdain to womanhood, shame of thy sex!
Insatiate monster! corrosive of my soul!
What makes this captain revelling in my house?
My house! nay, in my bed! you'll prove a soldier!
Follow Bellona, turn a martialist!
I'll try if thou hast learn'd to ward my blows.

Marian.

Why, how now, man! is this your madding month?
What, sir, will you forbid me in good fort
To entertain my friends?

Castiliano.

Your friends, you whore!
They are no friends of mine, nor come they here:
Clinton avaunt, my house is for no such.

Marian.

Alas, good sir, are you grown so suspicious,
Thus on no proofs to nourish jealousy?
I cannot kiss a man, but you'll be angry.
In spite of you, or whoso else faith nay,
My friends are welcome as they come this way,
If thou mislike it, mend it as you may:

What

What do you think to pin up Marian,
As you were wont to do your Spanish girls?
No, fir, I'll be half mistress of myself;
The other half is yours, if you deserve it.

Clinton.

What madness mov'd thee be displeas'd with me,
That always us'd thee with so kind regard?
Did I not at thy first arrival here
Conduct thee to the earl of London's house?

Marian.

Did I not, being unsolicited,
Bestow my first pure maiden-love on thee?

Clinton.

Did I not grace thee there in all the court,
And bear thee out against the daring abbot?

Marian.

Did I forsake many young gallant courtiers,
Enamoured with thy aged gravity?
Who now being weary of me, would't disgrace me?

Castiliano.

If there be any conscience left on earth,
How can I but believe these protestations?

Clinton.

Have I not always been thy nearest friend?

Marian.

Have I not always been thy dearest wife?

Clinton.

How much will all the world in this condemn thee?

Marian.

At first I little fear'd what now I find,
And grieve too late.

Castiliano.

Content thee, gentle dame;
The nature of our countrymen is such,
That if we see another kiss our wives,
We cannot brook it: but I will be pleas'd;
For, will I, nill I²³, so methinks I must.

²³ Will-I, nill I,] Whether I will or not. This mode of expression is often found in contemporary writers. Dekker's *Bel-man of London*, Sign. F.3. "— can by no means be brought to remember this new friend, yet will be, nill be, to the tavern he swears to have him."

238 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON

And, gentle captain, be not you offended;
I was too hot at first, but now repent it:
I pr'ythee, gentle dame, forgive me this,
And drown all jealousy in this sweet kiss.

Clinton.

This shews your wisdom; on, I'll follow you.

Marian.

Well, doctor, henceforth never reake it scorn
At my sweet Clinton's hands to take the horn. [Exit

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter Robin Goodfellow ²⁴, *in a suit of leather close to his body; his face and hands colour'd russet-colour, with a flail.*

Robin.

THE doctor's self would scarce know Robin now:
Curs'd Marian may go seek another man,
For I intend to dwell no longer with her;
Since that the bawtinado drove me thence.
These filken girls are all too fine for me:
My master shall report of those in hell,
Whilst I go range amongst the country-maids,
To see if home-spun lasses milder be
Than my curs'd dame, and Lacy's wanton wife.
Thus therefore will I live betwixt two shapes;
When as I list in this transform'd disguise,
I'll fright the country people as they pass;
And sometimes turn me to some other form,
And so delude them with fantastic shews.
But woe betide the silly dairy-maids,
For I shall fleet their cream-bowls night by night;
And slice the bacon flitches as they hang.

²⁴ *Robin Goodfellow.*] Sometimes called *Puck*, alias *Hobgoblin*. In the creed of ancient superstition, he was a kind of merry sprite, whose character and achievements are recorded in a ballad printed in Dr. *Percy's Reliques of ancient poetry*, vol. 3. p. 202; where the reader who is desirous of further information concerning this personage, may meet with complete satisfaction.

Well, here in Croydon, will I first begin
 To frolic it among the country lobs:
 This day, they say, is call'd Holyrood-day,
 And all the youth are now a nutting gone.
 Here are a crew of yonkers in this wood,
 Well sorted, for each lad hath got his lass.
 Marry, indeed, there is a tricksey ²⁵ girl,
 That three or four would fain be doing with;
 But that a wily priest among the rest
 Intends to bear her there away from all.
 The miller, and my brother Grim the collier,
 Appointed here to scuffle for her love.
 I am on Grim's side; for long time ago
 The devil call'd the collier like to like:

*Enter Grim, Clack, Parson Shortbosc, Joan with a
 bag of nuts.*

But here the miller and the collier come,
 With parson Mack-bate, and their tricksey girl.

Grim.

Parson, persuade me no more; I come, Jug, to your
 custody; Jug, hold the nut-bag.

Clack.

Nay, I will give you nuts to crack.

Grim.

Crack in thy throat and hauster too.

Shortbosc.

Neighbours, I wish you both agree:
 Let me be judge, be rul'd by me.

Grim.

Mr. Parson, remember what Puzziles saith, *Ne accesseris ad consilio, &c.* I tell you I found this written in the bottom of one of my empty sacks: Never persuade men that be execrable. I have vowed it, and I will perform it. The quarrel is great, and I have taken it upon my own shoulders.

Clack.

Ay, that thou shalt ere I have done; for I will lay it on, i'faith.

²⁵ *Tricksey.*] See note on *The Merry Devil of Edminton*, vol. 5.

Grim.

Grim.

If you lay it in, I must bear it out, this is all. If you strike, I must stand to any thing; although it be the biggest blow that you can lay upon me.

Joan.

Ye both have oftentimes sworn that ye love me;
Let me over-rule you in this angry mood:
Neighbours and old acquaintance, and fall out!

Robin.

Why, that is because thou wilt not let them fall in.

Grim.

I say, my heart bleedeth when thou speakest, and therefore do not provoke me. Yet, miller, as I am monstrous angry, so I have a wonderful great mind to be repeas'd; let's think what harm cometh by this same fighting: if we should hurt one another, how can we help it? Again, Clack; do but here forswear Joan's company, and I'll be thine instead of her, to use in all your businesses from Croydon to London; your's, Gilbert Grim, the chief collier for the king's majesty's own mouth.

Clack.

O, Grim, do I smell you? I'll make you forswear her before we two part; and therefore come on to this geere. Collier, I will lay on load, and when it is done, let who will take it off again.

Joan.

Yet once more hear me speak; leave off for shame,
If not for love; and let not others laugh
To see your follies; let me over-rule you.

Shortbosc.

Ay, let them fight, I care not, I
Mean time away with Joan will fly;
And whilst they two are at it here,
We two will sport ourselves elsewhere.

Robin.

There's a stone priest, he loveth a wench! Indeed,
He careth not, though both of them do bleed;
But Robin Goodfellow will conjure you,
And mar your match, and bang you soundly too.
I like this country-girl's condition well;

She's

GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON. 241

She's faithful, and a lover but to one ;
Robin stands here to right both Grim and her.

Grim.

Master Parson, look you to my love.
Miller, here I stand
With my heart and my hand
In sweet Jug's right,
With thee to fight.

Clack.

Come, let us to it then.

[They fight, Robin beateth the miller with a flail, and felleth him.]

Robin.

Now, miller, miller, dustipoul,
I'll clapper-claw your jobbernoul.

Sborthose.

Come, Jug, let's leave these senseless blocks,
Giving each other blows and knocks.

Joan.

I love my Grim too well to leave him so.

Sborthose.

You shall not chuse ; come, let's away.

[Sborthose pulleth Jug after him, Robin beateth the priest with his flail.]

Robin.

Nay then, fir priest, I'll make you stay.

Clack.

Nay, this is nothing, Grim ; we'll not part so. I
thought to have borne it off with my back-sword ward, and
I recciv'd it upon my bare costard ²⁶. *[They fight again.]*

Robin.

What, miller, are you up agin ?

Nay, then my flail shall never lin ²⁷,

Until I force one of us twain

Betake him to his heels amain. *[Robin beats the miller again.]*

Clack.

²⁶ *Costard.*] Head. See note 90 to Gammar Gurton's Needle, vol. 2. p. 66.

²⁷ *Nay, then my flail shall never lin.*] Shall never cease, stop, or leave off. So in *Ben Jonson's Staple of News*, Intermean after 4th Act.

"He'll never lin till he be a gallop."

242 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

Clack.

Hold thy hands, Grim ; thou hast murder'd me !

Grim.

Thou lyest, it is in my own offence I do it ; get thee gone then ; I had rather have thy room than thy company.

Clack.

Marry, with all my heart. O ! the collier playeth the devil with me.

Robin.

No, it is the devil playeth the collier with thee.

Shortbosc.

My bones are sore ; I pr'ythee, Joan,
Let's quickly from this place be gone.
Nay, come away, I love thee so,
Without thee I will never go.

Robin.

What, priest, still at your lechery ?

[*Robin beats the priest.*]

I'll thresh you for your knavery ;
If any ask who beat thee so,
Tell them 'twas Robin Goodfellow.

[*Shortbosc runneth away.*]

Mr. Whalley proposes to read *blin*. " The word, says he, is Saxon, and the substantive *blin*, derived from *blinnan*, occurs in the *Sad Shepherd*. " Yet the word occurs in Drayton, in the sense of stopping or staying, as it is used here by our Poet :

" Quoth Puck, my liege, I'll never *lin*,

" But I will thorough thick and thin.

Court of Fairy.

" So that an emendation may be unnecessary, and *lin*, the same as *leave*, " might have been in common use."

The latter conjecture is certainly right, many instances may be produced.

The Return from Parnassus. A. 4. S. 3.

" Fond world, that ne'er think't on that aged man,

" That Ariosto's old swift-paced man,

" Whose name is Time, who never *lins* to run,

" Loaden with bundles of decayed names.

A Chast Mayd in Cheapside. By Middleton. P. 36.

" You'll never *lin* 'till I make your tutor whip you ; you know how I " serv'd you once at the free schoole in Paul's Church Yard."

More Dissemblers besides Women, by the same. A. 3. S. 1.

" You nev'r *lin* railing on me, from one week's end to another."

Grim.

Grim.

Oh, miller, art thou gone? I am glad of it. I smelt my own infirmity every stroke I struck at him. Now, Joan, I dare boldly swear thou art my own; for I have won thee in the plain field. Now master Parson shall even strike it up; two or three words of his mouth will make her gammer Grim all the days of her life after.

Robin.

Here is two well-favoured slaves!
Grim and I may curse all good faces,
And not hurt our own.

Joan.

What, my love, how dost thou?

Grim.

Even as a conqueror may do: Jug, for thy sake I have made the miller a poor cripple all the days of his life, good for nothing else but to be carried into the spittle-house.

Robin.

Ay, there is one lye, for thou didst never hurt him.

Joan.

I am glad thou 'scapest, my love, and wast not hurt.

Grim.

Who, I hurt! Joan, thou knowest me not yet: thou mayest do better hereafter. I gave him five mortal wounds the first five strokes I made at him.

Robin.

There are five lyes clapt into one, for brevity's sake.

Grim.

And presently, upon the fifth blow, I made a dangerous thrust at him, and violently overthrew him, horse and foot, and there he lay.

Robin.

Nay, there you lye. The collier is excellent
To be companion to the devil himself.

Grim.

But where's master Parson?

Joan.

He was well bang'd, and knew not who it was did it,
And would have had me gone away with him.
Here lieth his nut-bag, and the miller's too:

244 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

They had no leisure to take them away.

Grim.

The better for us, Joan ; there is good cracking work : it will increase household stuff. Come, let's after the parson : we will comfort him, and he shall couple us. I'll have Pounceby the painter score upon our painted cloth at home, all the whole story of our going a nutting this Holyrood-day ; and he shall paint me up triumphing over the miller.

[*Exeunt Grim and Joan.*

Robin.

So let the collier now go boast at home
How he hath beat the miller from his love.
I like this modest country maid so well,
That I believe I must report in hell
Better of women than my master can.
Well, till my time's expir'd, I'll keep this quarter,
And night by night attend their merry meetings.

[*Exit Robin.*

Enter Dunstan, with earl Lacy sick.

Dunstan.

Let not your sickness add more feebleness
Unto your weaken'd age, but give me leave
To cure thy vain suspicious malady.
Thy eyes shall witness how thou art deceiv'd,
Misprizing thy fair lady's chastity :
For whilst we two stand closely here unseen,
We shall espy them presently approach.

Lacy.

O shew me this, thou blessed man of God,
And thou shalt then make young my wither'd age.

Dunstan.

Mark the beginning ; for here Musgrave cometh.

Enter Musgrave.

Musgrave.

O thrice unhappy and unfortunate,
That having fit occasion proffer'd thee
Of conference with beauteous Honorea,
Thou overslipp'd it, and o'erlipp'dst thyself.

Never since wedlock ty'd her to the earl
 Have I saluted her ; altho' report
 Is blaz'd abroad of her inconstancy.
 This is her evening walk, and here will I
 Attend her coming forth, and greet her fairly.

Lacy.

See, Dunstan, how their youth doth blind our age !
 Thou dost deceive thyself ; and bringest me
 To see my proper shame and infamy.

Enter Honorea.

But here she comes : my hope, my fear, my love.

Dunstan.

Here comes the unstain'd honour of thy bed ;
 Thy ears shall hear her virtuous chaste replies,
 And make thy heart confess thou dost her wrong.

Honorea.

Now modest love hath banish'd wanton thoughts,
 And alter'd me from that I was before,
 To that chaste life I ought to entertain ;
 My heart is ty'd to that strict form of life,
 That I joy only to be Lacy's wife.

Lacy.

God fill thy mind with these chaste virtuous thoughts !

Musgrave.

Oh now I see her, I am half asham'd
 Of so long absence, of neglect of speech.
 My dearest lady, patroness of beauty,
 Let thy poor servant make his true excuse !

Honorea.

Musgrave, I easily take your excuse,
 Accusing my fond self for what is past.

Musgrave.

Long time we wanted opportunity ;
 But now the forelock of well-wishing time
 Hath blest'd us both, that here without suspect
 We may renew the tenor of our loves.

Lacy.

O Dunstan, how she smiles to hear him speak !

Honorea.

No, child of fortune and inconstancy,

| R 3

Thou

246 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON,

Thou shalt not train me, or induce my love
To loose desires, or dishonoured thoughts :
'Tis God's own work that struck a deep remorse
Into my tainted heart for my past folly.

Musgrave.

O thou confound'ft me ! Speak as thou wert wont !
Like Love herself, my lovely Honorea !

Honorea.

Why how now, Musgrave ! what esteem'ft thou me,
That thou provok'ft me, that first deny'd me ?
I will not yield you reasons why I may not,
More than your own. You told me why you would not.

Musgrave.

By Heavens, by thee, my saint, my happiness !
No torture shall controul my heart in this,
To teach my tongue deny to call thee love.

Honorea.

Well, in regard that in my maiden-days
I lov'd thee well, now let me counsel thee ;
Reclaim these idle humours ; know thyself ;
Remember me ; and think upon my lord ;
And let these thoughts bring forth those chaste effects,
Which may declare thy change unto the world :
And this assure thee—whilst I breathe this air,
Earl Lacy's honour I will ne'er impair. [Exit Honorea,

Dunstan.

Now your eyes see that which your heart believ'd not,

Lacy.

'Tis a miracle beyond the reach
Of my capacity ! I could weep for joy,
Would but my tears express how much I love her !
Men may surmise amiss in jealousy,
Of those that live in untouch'd honesty.

Musgrave.

Is she departed ? and do I conceive
This height of grief, and do no violence
Unto myself ? Said she, I deny'd her ?
Far be it from my heart to think that thought !
All ye that, as I do, have felt this smart,
Ye know how burthensome 'tis at my heart.

Hereafter

Hereafter never will I prosecute
 This former motion, my unlawful suit;
 But, since she is earl Lacy's virtuous wife,
 I'll live a private, pensive, single life. [*Exit Musgrave.*]

Duſtan.

God doth diſpoſe all at his bleſſed will;
 And he hath chang'd their minds from bad to good,
 That we which ſee't may learn to mend ourſelves.

Lacy.

I'll reconcile myſelf to Muſgrave's love:
 I will recant my falſe ſuſpicion,
 And humbly make my true ſubmiſſion. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Marian chaſing.

Marian.

Say'ſt thou thou'lt make the houſe too hot for me?
 I'll ſoon abroad, and cool me in the air.
 I'll teach him never ſcorn to drink his health
 Whom I do love. He thinks to overcrow me
 With words and blows, but he is in the wrong.
 Begin he when he dares! Oh, he's too hot
 And angry, to live long with Marian.
 But I'll not long be ſubject to his rage:
 Here 'tis ſhall rid him of his hateful life,
 And bleſs me with the ſtile of widowhood.
 'Twas Harvey's work to temper it ſo well,
 The ſtrongest poiſon that he could deviſe.

Enter Clinton.

I have been too long ſubject to the ſlave;
 But now I'll caſt off that deteſted yoke.

Clinton.

Muſgrave, I ſee, is reconcil'd to th' earl;
 For now I met him walking with lord Lacy.
 Sure this is Marian's plot, and there ſhe ſtands,
 What, love, alone!

Marian.

Ay, captain, much diſturb'd
 About the frantic doctor's jealousy;
 Who, though he ſeem'd content when thou waſt there,

248 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

He after fell reviling thee and me ;
Robb'd me of all my jewels ; locks his plate
In his own trunk ; and lets me only live
To bear the idle title of his wife.

Clinton.

Fair Marian, by a soldier's loyal faith,
If my employment any way may help
To set thee free from this captivity,
Use me in any fort ; command my sword :
I'll do't as soon as thou shalt speak the word.

Marian.

Now, by my true love, which I wish to thee,
I conjure thee with resolution
To slay that monster ! Do not fail to do it !
For if thou dost, I would I had not spoke it.

Clinton.

Now try me ; and, when next we hap to meet,
The doctor lies stone dead at Clinton's feet,

Marian.

Nay, now I see thou lov'st me.

Clinton.

Say no more,
If thou dost loath him, he shall die therefore,

Marian.

To-morrow morning will he early rise
To see earl Lacy : meet him in the cloyster,
And make that place revenge his sanctuary,
This night will I break open all the trunks,
Rifle his caskets, rob him of his gold,
And all the doctor's treasure shall be thine.
If thou miscarry, yet this drink shall do it,

Enter Castiliano.

Castiliano.

My wife's impatience hath left me alone,
And made my servant run, I know not whither.

Marian.

Peace ! here is our eye-sore, Clinton, leave us now.

Clinton.

Clinton.

Nay, now occasion smiles, and I will do it.

[*Clinton draweth his sword.*]

Marian.

Put up thy sword ; be it thy morning's work :
Farewel to-night, but fail me not to-morrow.

Clinton.

Farewel, my love ! No rest shall close these eyes
Until the morning peep ; and then he dies.

[*Exit Clinton.*]

Castiliano.

Now I remember, I have quite out-run
My time prefix'd to dwell upon the earth :
Yet Akercock is absent : where is he ?
Oh, I am glad I am so well near rid
Of my earth's plague, and my lascivious dame.

Marian.

Hath he discover'd my intendment,
That he presageth his ensuing death ?
I must break off these fearful meditations.

Castiliano.

How shall I give my verdict up to Pluto
Of all these accidents ?

Marian.

Why how now, man !

Castiliano.

What, my dear dame ! my reconciled spouse !
Upon my foul, my love to thee is more
Now at this present, than 'twas e'er before.

Marian.

He hath descry'd me sure, he sootheth me so !

Castiliano.

I love thee now, because I now must leave thee,
This was the day of my nativity,
And therefore, sweet wife, let us revel it.

Marian.

Nay, I have little cause to joy at all.

Castiliano.

Thou cross'est still my mirth with discontents !
If ever heretofore I have displeas'd thee,

Sweet.

Sweet dame, I crave thy pardon now for all.
This is my birth-day, girl, I must rejoice :
Ask what thou wilt, and I will give it thee.

Marian.

Should I but ask to lead a quiet life,
You hardly would grant this unto your wife ;
Much less a thing that were of more import.

Castiliano.

Ask any thing, and try if I'll deny thee.

Marian.

Oh, my poor Musgrave, how hast thou been wrong'd,
And my fair lady !

Castiliano.

Use no preambles,
But tell me plainly.

Marian.

Nay, remember them,
And join their slander to that love you owe me,
And then old Lacy's jealousy.

Castiliano.

What then ?

Marian.

Nay, now I see you will not understand me.

Castiliano.

Thou art too dark ; speak plainly, and 'tis done.

Marian.

Then doom the earl, and bless poor Musgrave's eyes
With Honorea's love ; for this in thy hands lies.

Castiliano.

How should I doom him ?

Marian.

How else, but to death ?

Castiliano.

As if his life or death lay in my hands !

Marian.

He is thy patient, is he not ?

Castiliano.

He is.

Marian.

Then in thy hands lie both his life and death.
Sweet love, let Marian beg it at thy hands !

Why .

Why should the grey-beard live to cross us all?
Nay, now I see thee frown : thou wilt not do it.

Castiliano.

Fie, fie, dame, you are too suspicious.
Here's my hand : that thou may'st know I love thee,
I'll poison him this night before I sleep.

Marian.

Thou dost but flatter me.

Castiliano.

Tush, I have sworn it.

Marian.

And wilt thou do it?

Castiliano.

He is sure to die.

Marian.

I'll kiss thy lips for speaking that kind word :
But do it, and I'll hang about thy neck,
And curl thy hair, and sleep betwixt thy arms,
And teach thee pleasures which thou never knew'st.

Castiliano.

Promise no more, and trouble me no more ;
The longer I stay here, he lives the longer.
I must go to him now, and now I'll do it.
Go home and hasten supper 'gainst I come :
We will carouse to his departing soul.

Marian.

I will, dear husband ; but, remember me ;
When thou hast poison'd him, I'll poison thee.

[*Exit Marian.*]

Castiliano.

O wonderful, how women can dissemble !
Now she can kiss me, hang about my neck,
And soothe me with smooth smiles and lewd intreaties.
Well, I have promis'd her to kill the earl ;
And yet, I hope, ye will not think I'll do it.
Yet I will sound the depth of their device,
And see the issue of their bloody drift.
I'll give the earl, unknown to any man,
A sleepy potion, which shall make him seem
As if he were stark dead, for certain hours :

But

252 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

But in my absence no man shall report,
That for my dame's sake I did any hurt.

[Exit.

A C T V. S C E N E I.

Enter Grim, with Joan.

Grim.

NAY, but Joan, have a care ! bear a brain for all at once. 'Tis not one hour's pleasure that I suspect more than your mother's good countenance. If she be asleep, we may be bold under correction ; if she be awake, I may go my ways, and nobody ask me, Grim, whither goest thou ? Nay, I tell you, I am so well beloved in our town, that not the worst dog in the street will hurt my little finger.

Joan.

Why speak you this ? You need not fear my mother, For she was fast asleep four hours ago.

Grim.

Is she, sure ? Did you hear her snort in her dead sleep ? Why then, Joan, I have an hour's mirth for thee.

Joan.

And I a morsel of cream for thee.

Grim.

Why, there is one for another then : fetch it, Joan ; we will eat and kiss, and be as merry as your cricket. [Exit. *Joan for the cream.*] Art thou gone for it ? Well, go thy ways for the kindest lass that ever poor collier met withal ! I mean for to make short work with her, and marry her presently. I'll fingle her out, i'faith, till I make her bear double, and give the world to understand we will have a young Grim between us.

Enter

GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON. 253

Enter Joan with the cream

Joan.

Look here, my love, 'tis sweeten'd for thy mouth.

Grim.

You have put none of your love-powder in it, to make me enamourable of you; have you, Joan? I have a simple pate, to expect you! [*One knocketh at the door.*] Joan, hark, my brains beat, my head works, and my mind giveth me, some lovers of yours come sneaking hither now; I like it not, 'tis suspicious. [*One knocketh again.*]

Joan.

You need not fear it; for there is none alive
Shall bear the least part of my heart from thee.

Grim.

Say'ft thou so? hold there still, and whoe'er he be,
open door to him.

She openeth the door; enter Shorthose, and Robin after him.

Joan.

What, Mr. Parson, are you come so late;
You are welcome; here's none but Grim and I.

Shorthose.

Joan, I'll no more a nutting go,
I was so beaten to and fro;
And yet who it was I do not know.

Grim.

What, Mr. Parson, are you come so late, to say evening song to your parishioners? I have heard of your knavery. I give you a fair warning; touch her no lower than her girdle, and no higher than her chin; I keep her lips and her hips for my own use; I do, and so, welcome.

Robin.

This two hours have I dogg'd the parson round
About all Croydon, doubting some such thing.

Shorthose.

No, Grim, I here forswear to touch
Thy Joan, or any other such;
Love hath been so cudgell'd out of me,
I'll go no more to wood with thee.

Robin.

Robin.

'Twas Robin beat this holy mind into him ;
I think more cudgelling would make him more honest.

Grim.

You speak like an honest man, and a good parson ! and that is more. Here's Joan's benevolation for us, a mess of cream and so forth. Here is your place, Mr. Parson ; stand on the t'other side of the table, Joan. Eat hard to-night, that thou may marry us the better to-morrow.

Robin.

What is my brother Grim so good a fellow ?

[*They fall to the cream.*]

I love a mess of cream as well as they ;
I think it were best I slept in and made one :
Ho, ho, ho ²⁸, my masters ! No good fellowship !
Is Robin Goodfellow a bug-bear grown,

[*Robin falleth to eat.*]

That he is not worthy to be bid sit down ?

Grim.

O Lord save us ! sure he is some country-devil, he hath got a russet coat upon his face.

Shortbofe.

Now, *benedicite* ! who is this ?
I take him for some fiend, I wifs ²⁹ ;
Oh for some holy-water here
Of this same place this sp'rit to clear !

Robin.

Nay fear not, Grim, come fall unto your cream ;
Tut, I am thy friend, why dost not come and eat ?

Grim.

I, fir ! truly, master devil, I am well here, I thank you:

Robin.

I'll have thee come, I say ; why tremblest thou ?

²⁸ *Ho, ho, ho,*] See 45 note to Gammer Gurton's Needle, vol. 2.

P. 34.

²⁹ *I take him for some fiend, I wifs ;*] So in the *Return from Parnassus*;

A. 5. S. 4.

" I'll make thee run this lousy case, *I wifs*."

Massinger's City Madam, A. 4. S. 4.

" ——— 'Tis more comely,

" *I wifs*, than their other whim-whams."

Grim.

No, fir, not I; 'tis a pally I have still;
Truly, fir, I have no great acquaintance with you.

Robin.

Thou shalt have better, man, ere I depart,

Grim.

I will not, and if I can choose.

Robin.

Nay, come away; and bring your love with you.

Grim.

Joan! you were best go to him, Joan.

Robin.

What shall I fetch the man? The cream is sweet.

Grim.

No, fir, I am coming; much good do't you: I had need
of a long spoon, now I go to eat with the devil ³⁰.

Robin.

The parson's penance shall be thus to fast:
Come tell me, Grim, dost thou not know me, man?

Grim.

No, truly, fir; I am a poor man, fetcheth my living
out of the fire; your worship may be a gentleman devil,
for aught I know.

Robin.

Some men call me Robin Goodfellow.

Grim.

O lord! fir, Mr. Robert Goodfellow, you are very wel-
come, fir!

Robin.

This half year have I liv'd about this town,
Helping poor servants to dispatch their work,
To brew and bake, and other husbandry;

³⁰ *I had need of a long spoon.*] "He had need of a long spoon, that eats with the devil," is a proverbial phrase. See *Ray's Proverbs*, p. 97. So *Stephano* in the *Tempest*, A. 2. S. 2. alluding to this Proverb, says, "This is a devil, and no monster: I will leave him; I have no long spoon." See also *Comedy of Errors*, A. 4. S. 3. and *Chaucer's Squier's Tale*, v. 10916, Edit. 1775.

"Therefore behoveth him a ful long spone,

"That shall etc with a fiend."

256 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

Tut, fear not, maid ; if Grim be merry,
I will make up the match between ye.

Grim.

There will be a match in the devil's name !

Robin.

Well, now the night is almost spent,
Since your affections all are bent
To marriage, and to constant love ;
Grim, Robin doth thy choice approve ;
And there's the priest shall marry you ;
Go to it, and make no more ado :
Sirrah, fir priest, go get you gone,
And join both her and him anon ;
But ne'er hereafter let me take you
With wanton love-tricks : lest I make you
Example to all stone-priests ever,
To deal with other men's loves never.

Shorthose.

Valete vos, and God blefs me,
And rid me from his company !
Come, Grim, I'll join you hand in hand,
In facred wedlock's holy band.
I will no more a nutting go,
That journey caufed all this woe.

Grim.

Come, let's to hand in hand quickly ! Mr. Robert,
you were ever one of the honeftest merry devils that ever
I faw.

Joan.

Sweet Grim, and if thou loveft me, let's away !

Grim.

Nay, now, Joan, I fpy a hole in your coat ! if you
cannot endure the devil, you'll never love the collier.
Why, we two are sworn brothers. You fhall fee me talk
with him even as familiarly as if I fhould parbreak my
mind and my whole ftomach upon thee.

Joan.

I prithee do not, Grim.

Grim.

Who, not I ? O lord, Mr. Robert Goodfellow, I have
a poor

a poor cottage at home; whither Joan and I will jog as merrily! We will make you no stranger if you come thither. You shall be used as devilishly as you would wish, i'faith. There is never a time my cart cometh from London, but the collier bringeth a goose in his sack; and that with the giblets thereof is at your service.

Robin.

This is more kindness, Grim, than I expected.

Grim.

Nay, fir, if you come home, you shall find it true, I warrant you. All my whole family shall be at your devilship's pleasure, except my poor Joan here, and she is my own proper night-geer.

Robin.

Gramercies, but away in haste;
The night is almost spent and past.

Grim.

God be with you, fir; I'll make as much haste about it as may be; for and that were once done, I would begin a new piece of work with you, Joan.

[*Exeunt all but Robin.*]

Robin.

Now, joy betide this merry morn,
And keep Grim's forehead from the horn!
For Robin bids his last adieu
To Grim, and all the rest of you.

[*Exit Robin.*]

Enter Clinton alone.

Clinton.

Bright Lucifer, go couch thee in the clouds,
And let this morning prove as dark as night!
That I unseen may bring to happy end
The doctor's murder, which I do intend.
'Tis early yet, he is not so soon stirring;
But stir he ne'er so soon, so soon he dies:
I'll walk along before the palace gate;
Then shall I know how near it is to day,
He shall have no means to escape away.

[*Exit Clinton.*]

*Enter Castiliano.**Castiliano.*

My trunk's broke open, and my jewels gone !
 My gold and treasure stol'n ! my house despoil'd
 Of all my furniture, and nothing left !
 No, not my wife ; for she is stol'n away :
 But she hath pepper'd me, I feel it work—
 My teeth are loosen'd, and my belly swell'd ;
 My entrails burn with such distemper'd heat,
 That well I know my dame hath poison'd me ;
 When she spoke fairest, then she did this act.
 When I have spoken all I can imagine,
 I cannot utter half that she intends ;
 She makes as little poisoning of a man,
 As to carouse ; I feel that this is true :

Enter Clinton.

Nay, now I know too much of womankind.
 Zounds, here's the captain ! what should he make here
 With his sword drawn ? there's yet more villainy.

Clinton.

The morning is far spent, but yet he comes not !
 I wonder Marian sends him not abroad !
 Well, doctor, linger time, and linger life !
 For long thou shalt not breathe upon the earth.

Castiliano.

No, no, I will not live amongst ye long :
 Is it for me thou wait'st, thou bloody wretch ?
 Here poison hath prevented thee in murder.

*Enter Earl Morgan, St. Dunstan with Honora
 fainting, and Marian.*

Now here be they, suppose earl Lacy dead !
 See, how this lady grieveth for that she wisheth !

Dunstan.

My lord of London, by his sudden death,
 And all the signs before his late departure,
 'Tis very probable that he is poison'd.

Marian.

Do you but doubt it ! credit me, my lord,
 I heard him say, that drink should be his last ;
 I heard my husband speak it, and he did it.

Castiliano.

Castiliano.

There is my old friend, she always speaks for me :
Oh shameless creature, was't not thy device ?

Morgan.

Let not extremity of grief o'erwhelm thee,
My dearest Honorea ! for his death shall be
Surely reveng'd with all severity
Upon the doctor, and that suddenly.

Clinton.

What fortune's this, that all these come this way
To hinder me, and save thy life to-day ?

Honorea.

My gracious lord, this doleful accident
Hath rob'd me of my joy ; and, royal earl,
Though in thy life thou didst suspect my love,
My grief and tears suspicions shall remove.

Marian.

Madam, to you, and to your father's love,
I owe as much and more than my own life.
Had I ten husbands should agree to do it,
My gracious lord, you presently should know it.

Castiliano.

Ay, there's a girl : think you I did not well
To live with such a wife, to come from hell.

Marian.

Look, look, my lord, there stands the murderer !

Castiliano.

How am I round beset on every side !
First, that same captain here stands to kill me ;
My dame she hath already poisoned me ;
Earl Morgan he doth threaten present death ;
The countess Honorea, in revenge
Of Lacy, is extremely incens'd against me :
All threatens, none shall do it, for my date
Is now expired, and I must back to hell.
And now, my servant, wherefoe'er thou be,
Come quickly, Akercock, and follow me.
Lordings, adieu, and my curs'd wife farewell,
If me ye seek, come follow me to hell.

[The ground opens, and he falls down into it.

S 2

Morgan.

269 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON.

Morgan.

The earth that opened, now is clos'd again.

Dunstan.

It is God's judgment for his grievous sins.

Clinton.

Was there a quagmire, that he sunk so soon ?

Honorea.

O miracle ! now may we justly say,
Heavens have reveng'd my husband's death this day.

Morgan.

Alas, poor Marian ! we have wrong'd thee much
To cause thee match thyself to any such.

Marian.

Nay, let him go, and sink into the ground ;
For such as he are better lost than found :
Now, Honorea, we are freed from blame,
And both enrich'd with happy widows names.

Enter Earl Lacy with Forrest, Musgrave.

Lacy.

O lead me quickly to that mourning train,
Which weep for me, who am reviv'd again.

Honorea.

Marian, I shed some tears of perfect grief.

[She falleth into a swoon.]

Morgan.

Do not my eyes deceive me ? liveth my son ?

Lacy.

My lord and father ! both alive and well
Recover'd of my weakness ; where's my wife ?

Marian.

Here is my lady, your beloved wife ;
Half dead to hear of your untimely end.

Lacy.

Look on me, Honorea ; see thy lord :
I am not dead, but live to love thee still.

Dunstan.

'Tis God disposeth all things as he will ;
He raiseth those the wicked wish to fall.

Clinton.

Clinton.

Zounds, I still watch on this inclosed ground ;
For if he rise again, I'll murder him.

Honorea.

My lord, my tongue's not able to report
Those joys my heart conceives to see thee live.

Dunstan.

Give God the glory ; he recovered thee,
And wrought this judgment on that cursed man,
That set debate and strife among ye all.

Morgan.

My lord, our eyes have seen a miracle,
Which after ages ever shall admire.
The Spanish doctor, standing here before us,
Is sunk into the bowels of the earth,
Ending his vile life by a viler death.

Lacy.

But, gentle Marian, I bewail thy loss,
That wert maid, wife, and widow ; all so soon.

Marian.

'Tis your recovery that joys me more
Than grief can touch me for the doctor's death.
He never lov'd me whilst he liv'd with me,
Therefore the less I mourn his tragedy.

Morgan.

Henceforth we'll stricter look to strangers lives,
How they shall marry any English wives :
Now all men shall record this fatal day ;
Lacy revived, the doctor sunk in clay.

[*The trumpets sound, exeunt omnes nisi Dunstan.*

Dunstan.

Now is earl Lacy's house fill'd full of joy,
He and his lady wholly reconcil'd,
Their jars all ended : those that were like men
Transformed, turn'd unto their shapes again ;
And, gentlemen, before we make an end,
A little longer yet your patience lend,
That in your friendly censures you may see
What the infernal synod do decree ;

262 GRIM, THE COLLIER OF CROYDON,

And after judge, if we deserve to name
This play of ours, *The devil and his dame.* [Exit,
[It thunders and lighteneth. Enter Pluto, Minos, Aeacus,
Rhadamanthus, with Fury bringing in Malbecco's ghost.]

Pluto.

Minos, is this the day he should return,
And bring us tidings of his twelvemonth spent?

Enter Belpagor like a devil, with horns on his head, and
Akercock.

Minos.

It is, great king, and here Belpagor comes.

Pluto.

His visage is more ghastly than't was wont,
What ornaments are those upon his head?

Belpagor.

Hell, I salute thee! now I feel myself
Rid of a thousand torments. O vile earth,
Worse for us devils than hell itself for men!
Dread Pluto, hear thy subject's just complaint

[Belpagor kneeleth to Pluto,

Proceeding from the anguish of my soul!
O never send me more into the earth!
For there dwells dread and horror more than here,

Pluto.

Stand forth, Belpagor, and report the truth
Of all things have betide thee in the world.

Belpagor.

When first, great king, I came into the earth,
I chose a wife both young and beautiful,
The only daughter to a noble earl:
But when the night came that I should her bed,
I found another laid there in her stead;
And in the morning when I found the change,
Though I deny'd her, I was forc'd to take her,
With her I liv'd in such a mild estate,
Us'd her still kindly, lov'd her tenderly;
Which she requited with such light regard,
So loose demeanour, and dishonest life,

That

That she was each man's whore that was my wife.
 No hours but gallants flock'd unto my house,
 Such as she fancied for her loathsome lust;
 With whom, before my face, she did not spare
 To play the strumpet: Yea, and more than this,
 She made my house a stew for all resorts,
 Herself a bawd to others' filthiness;
 Which, if I once began but to reprove,
 Oh, then her tongue was worse than all the rest!
 No ears with patience would endure to bear her,
 Nor would she ever cease till I submit;
 And then she would speak me fair, but wish me dead.
 A hundred drifts she laid to cut me off,
 Still drawing me to dangers of my life;
 And now my twelvemonth being near expir'd,
 She poison'd me; and least that means should fail,
 She entic'd a captain to have murdered me.
 In brief, whatever tongue can tell of ill,
 All that may well be spoken of my dame.

Akercock.

Poor Akercock was fain to fly her sight;
 For never an hour, but she laid on me;
 Her tongue and fist walked all so nimbly.

Pluto.

Doth then, Belphegor, this report of thine
 Against all women hold in general?

Belphegor.

Not so, great prince: for, as 'mongst other creatures,
 Under that sex are mingled good and bad.
 There are some women virtuous, chaste, and true;
 And to all those the devil will give their due.
 But, oh my dame! born for a scourge to man,
 For no mortality would endure that
 Which she a thousand times hath offered me.

Pluto.

But what new shapes are those upon thy head?

Belphegor.

These are the ancient arms of cuckoldry;
 And these my dame hath kindly left to me;
 For which Belphegor shall be here derided,

Unless your great infernal majesty
Do solemnly proclaim, no devil shall scorn
Hereafter still to wear the goodly horn.

Pluto.

This for thy service I will grant thee freely :
All devils shall, as thou dost, like horns wear,
And none shall scorn Belphagor's arms to bear.
And now, Malbecco, hear thy latest doom ;
Since that thy first reports are justified
By after-proofs, and womens looseness known,
One plague more will I send upon the earth :
Thou shalt assume a light and fiery shape,
And so for ever live within the world ;
Dive into womens thoughts, into mens hearts ;
Raise up false rumours, and suspicious fears ;
Put strange inventions into each man's mind ;
And for these actions they shall always call thee
By no name else but fearful jealousy.
Go, Jealousy, be gone, thou hast thy charge ;
Go, range about the world that is so large.
And now, for joy Belphagor is return'd,
The furies shall their tortures cast away,
And all hell o'er we'll make it holy-day.

[It thundereth and lighteneth. Exeunt omnes.]

The City Night-Cap.

ROBERT DAVENPORT is a writer of whom scarce any particulars are known. Langbaine¹ says he was "the author of two plays in the reign of King Charles the Martyr, though not publish't 'till the reign of King Charles the second." Notwithstanding this authority, it is more probable that he wrote in the time of James the first, as two poems of a very grave cast were published by him in the year 1625, the one entitled, "*A Crowne for a Conqueror, from Rev. xx. 12,*" and the other, "*Too late to call backe Yesterday, and To-morrow comes not yet. The words fancied in a dialogue, supposed betweene a Lover and the Day.*" This last is dedicated to his noble friends, as he calls them, Mr. Richard Robinson² and Mr. Michael Bowyer; and in his address to them, he styles both the poems some of the expence of his time at sea. From the address prefixed to the play of King John and Matilda, signed R. D. he appears to have been alive in the year 1655, when that piece was first published. He wrote, 1. "King John and Matilda, a tragedy, as it was acted with great applause by her majesties servants, at the Cock-pit in Drury-lane," 1655, 4to. It was published for Andrew Pennycuicke, one of the performers, who says he was the last who played the character of Matilda. 2. "The City Night-Cap, or Crede quod habes & habes, a tragedy, as it was acted with great applause by her majesties servants, at the Phoenix in Drury-lane," 1661, 4to. Mr. Malone says³, he was the author of a play, not published, called *The Pirate*.

¹ Lives of Dramatick Poets, p. 116.

² Both Robinson and Bowyer were players. The former is in the list of the performers in Shakspeare's plays, and acted in the *Roman Actor*. The name of the latter is to be found amongst the performers in *The Bondman*, by Massinger, *King John*, and *Matilda*, &c.

³ Attempt to ascertain the order of Shakspeare's plays.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DUKE of Verona.

DUKE of Venice, brother to *Abstemia*,

DUKE of Milan.

ANTONIO, the duke's son.

LORENZO, husband to *Abstemia*.

PHILIPPO, his friend.

LODOVICO, husband to *Dorothea*.

LORDS of Verona.

SENATORS of Venice.

SANCHIO, } lords of Milan,
SEBASTIANO, }

PANDULPHO.

SPINOSO.

JASPRO.

JOVANI.

FRANCISCO, servant to *Lodovico*,

PAMBO, a clown.

MORBO, a pander.

A Turk, slave to *Antonio*.

Two slaves to *Lorenzo*.

Officers and servants.

ABSTEMIA, *Lorenzo's* wife, and sister to the duke of Venice,

DOROTHEA, *Lodovico's* wanton lady.

TIMPANINA, a bawd.

Ladies.

The

* The City Night-Cap.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

Enter Lorenzo and Philipppo.

Lorenzo.

THOU sha't try her once more.

Philipppo.

Fie, fie!

Lorenzo.

Thou shalt do't.

If thou be'st my friend, thou'lt do't:

Philipppo.

Try your fair wife?

You know 'tis an old point, and wond'rous frequent
In most of our Italian comedies.

Lorenzo.

What do I care for that? let him seek new ones,
Cannot make old ones better; and this new point
(Young fir) may produce new smooth passages,
Transcending those precedent. Pray, will ye do't?

Philipppo.

Pray, fool yourself no farther: twice you have sway'd
me;

Twice I have try'd her; and 'tis not yet, ye know,
Ten days since our reconciliation.

* The plot of this comedy is partly taken from the novel of the *Curious Impertinent* in *Don Quixote*, and partly from *Boccace's Decameron*, day 7, novel 7.

How

How will it shew in you, so near a kinsman
 To the duke; nay, having woven yourself into
 The close-wrought mystery of opinion,
 Where you remain a soldier, a man
 Of brain and quality, to put your friend
 Again on such a business, and to expose
 Your fair wife to the tempest of temptation?
 And, by the white unspotted cheek of truth,
 She is——

Lorenzo.

A woman.

Philippe.

A good woman.

Lorenzo.

Pish.

Philippe.

As far from your distrust, as bad ones are from truth:
 She is in love with virtue: would not boast it,
 But that her whole life is a well-writ story,
 Where each word stands so well plac'd, that it passes
 Inquisitive detraction to correct.
 She's modest, but not sullen; and loves silence;
 Not that she wants apt words, (for when she speaks,
 She inflames love with wonder) but because
 She calls wise silence the soul's harmony.
 She's truly chaste; yet such a foe to coyness,
 The poorest call her courteous; and which is excellent,
 (Tho' fair and young) she shuns to expose herself
 To the opinion of strange eyes. She either seldom
 Or never walks abroad but in your company;
 And then with such sweet bashfulness, as if
 She were venturing on crack'd ice; and takes delight
 To step into the print your foot hath made,
 And will follow you whole fields: so she will drive
 Tedioufness out of time with her sweet character.
 And therefore, good my friend, forbear to try
 The gold has past the fire.

Lorenzo.

Thou foolish friend,

Beauty, like the herb Larix, is cool i'th' water,
But hot i'th' stomach. Women are smooth flatterers,
But cunning injurers.

Philippa.

Thou wond'rous yellow friend,
Temper an antidote with antimony,
And 'tis infectious : mix jealousy with marriage,
It poisons virtue : let the child feel the sting,
He'll fly the honey-comb. Has she one action
That can expose you to distrust ?

Lorenzo.

Oh ! when the Elefander-leaf looks most green,
The sap is then most bitter. An approv'd appearance
Is no authentic instance : she that is lip-holy,
Is many times heart-hollow.—Here she comes.

Enter Abstemia.

A prayer-book in her hand ! oh hypocrisy !
How fell'st thou first in love with woman ? wilt try again
But this one time ?

Philippa.

Condition'd you will stand
Ear-witness to our conference, that you may take
In at your ear a virtue that will teach
Your erring soul to wonder.

Lorenzo.

He would wittal me,
With a consent to my own horns : I will.
I'll give thee a new occasion : there lurks
In woman's blood a vindicating spirit.

Abstemia.

I came, fir, to give you notice,
Count Lodovico, Stroimo, Spinoso, and Pandulpho,
With the rest of the confilliadory, certify
They are setting forth to meet the duke your kinsman,
Returning from Venice.

Lorenzo.

Oh, there he has seen the duke your brother.

Abstemia.

Yes, fir, and they stay but for your company.

Lorenzo.

272 THE CITY NIGHT-CAP.

Lorenzo.

And you're cloy'd with't—

[Kicks her, and exit. She weeps.]

Philippo.

And will you still be us'd thus? Oh, madam,
I do confes twice I have batter'd at
The fort I fain would vanquish, and I know
Ye hold out more, 'cause ye would seem a foldier,
Than in hate to the assailant. I am again
Inflam'd with those sweet fountains from whence flow
Such a pair of streams: Oh strong force of desire!
The quality should quench, hath set on fire.
I love you in your sorrows.

Abstemio.

And I sorrow
In nothing but your love. Twice, Philippo,
Have I not beat back the impetuous storm
Of thy incessant rudeness? Wilt thou again
Darken fair honour with dishonesty?
Thou know'st my lord hath long and truly lov'd thee
In the wisdom of a friend, in a fair cause:
He wears his good sword for thee, lays his heart
A lodger in thy bosom, proclaims thee partner
In all he hath, but me? Oh, be not counterfeit:
We all conclude, a diamond with clouds
The goldsmith casts into his dust: and a gentleman
So blemish'd in his honour, blots his name
Out of the herald's book, stands a lost man
In goodness and opinion. Oh, Philippo,
Make me once more so happy to believe
'Tis but a painted passion.

Lorenzo.

Most acute witch!

Philippo.

Come, learn of your city wagtail; with one eye
Violently love your husband, and with t'other
Wink at your friend.

Lorenzo.

I will not trust you, brother.

Philippo.

Philippe.

He seeks ; will ye not have him find ? cries ye out
In his mad fits, a strumpet ; rails at all women,
Upon no cause, but because you are one.
He gives wound upon wound, and then pours vinegar
Into your bleeding reputation,
Poison'd with bitter calumny. Pox on him :
Pile a reciprocal reward upon him :
Let ballad-mongers crown him with their scorns :
Who buys the buck's-head well deserves the horns.
Demur not on't, but clap them on.

Abstemia.

You are, fir,
Just like the Indian hyssop, prais'd of strangers
For the sweet scent, but hated of the inhabitants
For the injurious quality. Can he love the wife,
That would betray the husband ? Hast thou not seen me
Bear all his injuries, as the ocean suffers
The angry bark to plough thorough her bosom,
And yet is presently so smooth, the eye
Cannot perceive where the wide wound was made ?
And cannot this inform, I love him better
In his four follies, than you in your sweet flatteries ?
If Verona hath observ'd any errors in me,
I well may call for grace to amend them ;
But will never fall from grace to befriend you.

Philippe.

With what a majesty good women thunder !

Lorenzo.

H'as given her some close nod that I am here.

Abstemia.

Rip up the end of thy intent, and see
How shame and fear do lurk where you would walk,
Like a pair of serpents in a flow'ry mead.
Lust sees with pleasure, but with fear doth tread.

Philippe.

Very brave, woman !

Abstemia.

What is the pleasure thou pursu'st ? A fin
Finish'd with infinite sorrows. Read, and find

274 THE CITY NIGHT-CAP.

How barb'rous nations punish it with death :
 How a minute's sin so stolen, tho' in the face
 Sit summer calms, all smooth ; yet thou wilt hear,
 From the eternal alarm of thy conscience,
 How it sets within thy soul continual tempests,
 Thunder, and dismal blackness ! Mark but the course
 Of the holy-seeming hollow man, and see
 How he that glories Heaven with no honour,
 Covets to glorify himself with honesty.
 And, to put you past your hopes, let me leave this with
 you ;

Thou may'st hold an elephant with a thread, eat fire
 And not be burnt, or catch birds with desire ;
 Quench flame with oil, cut diamonds with glass,
 Pierce steel with feathers : this thou may'st bring to pass
 Sooner than hope to steal the husband's right,
 Whose wife is honest, and no hypocrite. [Exit.

Philippo.

What think you now, sir ?

Lorenzo.

Why now I do think it possible for the world
 To have an honest woman in it. — Goodbye, sir ;
 I must go meet the duke. Adieu.

Philippo.

Farewell.

Oh jealousy ! how near thou dwellest to hell ! [Exeunt.

*Enter Lodovico, Pandulpho, Spinofo, Yafro, Jovani,
 and Clown.*

Lodovico.

The duke not seven leagues off ! my horse, rogues.

Pandulpho.

Our negligence deserves just blame ; and how
 'Twill please his grace to construe it, we know not.

Yafro.

But where's your fair chaste wife, my lord ?

Lodovico.

Marry, with my man Francisco. Oh that fellow !
 She were undone without him ; for indeed [Exit

She takes great pleasure in him : he learns her music.
To hear what counsel she will give him ! if
He but screw his look sometimes with the pin,
She will tell him straight 'twas an unchristian look.
I love him dearly.

Spinoso.

But can your honour never wooe your lady
To a more sociable affability ? She will not kifs,
Nor drink, nor talk, but against new fashions.

Lodovico.

Oh, fir, she is my crown : nor is it requisite
Women should be so sociable. I have had such a coil with
her, to bring her but to look out at window ! When we
were first married, she would not drink a cup of wine, un-
less nine parts of it were water.

Onnes.

Admir'd temperance !

Lodovico.

Nay, and ye knew all, my lords, ye would say so.
T'other day I brought an English gentleman home with
me, to try a horse I should sell him : he (as ye know their
custom, tho' it be none of ours) makes at her lips the first
dash.

Clown.

He dash'd her out of countenance, I'm sure of that.

Lodovico.

She did so pout and spit, that my hot-brain'd gallant
could not forbear but ask the cause. Quoth she—

Clown.

No, fir, she spit again, before quoth she left her lips.

Lodovico.

I think she did indeed : but then quoth she, a kifs, fir,
is sin's earnest-penny. Is't not true, Pambo ?

Clown.

Very true, fir. By the same token, quoth he to her
again, if you dislike the penny, lady, pray let me change
it into English halfpence ; and so gave her two for't.

Lodovico.

But how she vex'd then ! then she rattled him, and told
him

him roundly, tho' confidence made cuckolds in England,
she could no coxcombs in Italy.

Clown.

But did ye mark how bitterly he clos'd it with a mid-
dling jest?

Lodovico.

What was that, I pr'ythee?

Clown.

Why, quoth he again, Confidence makes not so many
cuckolds in England, but craft picks open more padlocks
in Italy.

Jovani.

That was something sharp.—But there she comes.

Enter Dorothea and Francisco.

Lodovico.

Ye shall see how I'll put ye all upon her presently.

Clown.

Then I shall take my turn.

Dorothea.

Francis.

Francisco.

Madam.

Dorothea.

Have you chang'd the ditty you last set?

Francisco.

I have, madam.

Dorothea.

The conceit may stand; but I hope you have cloath'd
the method in a more christian-like apparel.

Francisco.

I have, lady.

Dorothea.

Pray, let me hear it now.

Francisco.

*She that in these days looks for truth,
Seldom or never finds, in sooth.*

Dorothea.

That's wond'rous well.

Clown.

Clown.

Yes, in sadness.

Lodovico.

Peace, firrah; nay, she's built of modesty.

Francisco.

*Even as a wicked kiss defiles the lips,
So do new fashions her that through them trips.*

Dorothea.

Very modest language.

Francisco.

*She that doth pleasure use for what 'twill bring her,
Will pluck a rose, altho' she prick her finger.*

Dorothea.

Put in hurt her finger, good Francis; the phrase will be more decent.

Pandulpho.

Y' are a wondrous happy man in one so virtuous!

Lodovico.

Nay, ye shall have no count Lorenzo of me, I warrant ye.

Clown.

Nor no count Lorenzo's lady of your wife, I warrant ye.

Lodovico.

Sweet chick, I come to take leave of thee: finger in nye already!

We are all to meet the duke this afternoon, bird,
Who is now come from Venice: thou may'st walk
And see the count Lorenzo's lady.

Dorothea.

Alas! she's too merry for my company.

Jaspro.

Too merry! I have seen her sad,
But very seldom merry.

Dorothea.

I mean, my lord,
That she can walk, tell tales, run in the garden.

Clown.

Why then your ladyship may hold your tongue, say nothing, and walk in the orchard.

T 3

Dorothea.

Dorothea.

She can drink a cup of wine not allay'd with water.

Clown.

Why then you may drink a cup of water without wine.

Dorothea.

Nay, if a nobleman come to see her lord,
She will let him kiss her too, against our custom.

Pandulpho.

Why a modest woman may be kiss'd by accident,
Yet not give the least touch to her reputation.

Lodovico.

Well said, touch her home.

Dorothea.

Nay, but they may not : she that will kiss,
They say, will do worse, I warrant her.

Jovani.

Why I have seen you, madam, kiss'd against your will.

Dorothea.

Against my will it may be I have been kiss'd indeed.

Clown.

Pshaw, there's nothing against a woman's will ; and I
dare be sworn, if my lady kiss but any one man, 'tis be-
cause she cannot do with all.

Lodovico.

Nay, I know that to be true, my lords ; and at this
time,
Because you cannot do with all, pray kiss them in order ;
Kiss her all over, gentlemen, and we are gone.

Dorothea.

Nay, good my lord, 'tis against our nation's custom.

Lodovico.

I care not ; let naturals love nations :
My humour's my humour.

Spinafa.

I must have my turn too, then.

Jovani.

It must go round.

Dorothea.

Fie, fie.

Lodovico.

Look how she spits now !

Jaspro.

Jaspro.

The deeper the sweeter, lady.

Clown.

The nearer the bone, the sweeter the flesh, lady.

Dorothea.

How now, fauce-box!

Clown.

Did not my lord bid the gentlemen kiss you all over?

Lodovico.

I have sweet cause to be jealous, have I not, gentlemen? no: *Crede quel habes, & habes* still; he that believes he has horns, has them. Will you go bring my horse, sir?

Clown.

I will bring your horse, sir; and your horse shall bring his tail with him. *[Exit.]*

Lodovico.

Francis, I pr'ythee stay thou at home with thy lady: get thy instrument ready; this melancholy will spoil her: before these lords here, make her but laugh, when we are gone——

Francisco.

Laugh before these lords when they are gone, sir!

Lodovico.

Pish, I mean, make her laugh heartily before we come home; and before these lords, I promise thee a lease of forty crowns per annum.

Francisco.

Can ye tell whether she be ticklish, sir?

Lodovico.

Oh, infinitely ticklish!

Francisco.

I'll deserve your lease, then, ere you come home, I warrant.

Lodovico.

And thou shalt ha't, i'faith, boy.

*Enter Clown.**Clown.*

Your horse is ready, sir.

T 4

Lodovico.

Lodovico.

My lords, I think we have staid with the longest; farewel, Doll: *Crede quod babes, & babes*, gallants.

Pandulpho.

Our horses shall fetch it up again: farewel, sweet lady.

Jaspro.

Adieu, sweet mistress: and whensoever I marry, Fortune turn up to me no worse card than you are.

Clown.

And whensoever I marry, Venus send me a card may save Fortune the labour, and turn up herself. [*Exeunt.*]

Dorothea.

How now? why loiter you behind? why ride not you along with your lord?

Francisco.

To lie with your ladyship.

Dorothea.

How?

Francisco.

In the bed, upon the bed, or under the bed.

Dorothea.

Why, how now Francis!

Francisco.

This is the plain truth on't, I would lie with ye.

Dorothea.

Why Francis——

Francisco.

I know too that you will lie with me.

Dorothea.

Nay, but Francis——

Francisco.

Plague of Francis! I am neither Frank nor Francis, But a gentleman of Millain, that even there Heard of your beauty, which report there guarded With such a chastity, the glittering'st sin Held no artillery of power to shake it. Upon which, I resolv'd to try conclusions; Assum'd this name and fortune, sought this service: And I will tell ye truly what I guess you.

Dorothea.

You will not ravish me, Francis?

Francisco.

Francisco.

No ; but unravel ye, in two lines experience writ lately :

Extreams in virtue, are but clouds to vice :

She'll do i'th' dark, who is i'th' day too nice.

Dorothea.

Indeed ye do not well to belye me thus.

Francisco.

Come, I'll lie with thee, wench, and make all well again ; tho' your confident lord makes use of *Crede quod habes, & habes*, and holds it impossible for any to be a cuckold, can believe himself none : I would have his lady have more wit, and clap them on.

Dorothea.

And, truly Francis, some women now would do't.

Francisco.

Who can you chuse more convenient to practise with than me, whom he doats on ? where shall a man find a friend but at home ? so you break one proverb's pate, and give the other a plaister : Is't a match, wench ?

Dorothea.

Well, for once it is : but and ye do any more, indeed I'll tell my husband.

Francisco.

But when shall this once be ? now ?

Dorothea.

Now ? no indeed, Francis.

It shall be soon at night, when your lord's come home.

Francisco.

Then ! how is it possible ?

Dorothea.

Possible ! women can make any of these things possible, Francis : now many casualties may cross us ; but soon at night, my lord, I'm sure, will be so sleepy, what with his journey, and deep healths for the duke's return, that before he goes to bed (as he uses still, when he has been hard a drinking) he will sleep upon the bed in's cloaths so sound, bells would not wake him, rung in the chamber.

Francisco.

The cuckold slumbers ; and tho' his wife hit him o'th' forehead with her heel, he dreams of no such matter.

Dorothea.

Dorothea.

Now Pambo, that makes him merry in his chamber,
shall, when the candle's out, and he asleep, bring you
into the chamber.

Francisco.

But will he be secret?

Dorothea.

Will he, good soul! I am not to try him now.

Francisco.

'Sfoot, this is brave,
My kind lord's fool, is my cunning lady's knave.
But pray how then?

Dorothea.

When you are in at door, on right before you, you
shall feel the bed; give me but softly a touch, I'll rise,
and follow you into the next chamber: but truly and you
do not use me kindly, I shall cry out and spoil all.

Francisco.

Use you kindly! was lady e'er us'd cruelly i'th' dark?
Do you but prepare Pambo and your maid, let me alone
with her mistress: about eleven I desire to be expected.

Dorothea.

And till the clock strike twelve, I'll lie awake.

Francisco.

Now ye dare kiss?

Dorothea.

Once with my friend, or so: yet you may take two,
Francis.

Francisco.

My cast is ams-ace then.

Dorothea.

Duce-ace had got the game.

Francisco.

Why then you're welcome. Adieu, my dainty mistress.

Dorothea.

Farewel, kind Francis.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Lorenzo, as from horse.

Lorenzo.

I have given them all the slip, the duke and all;

And

And am at home before them : I cannot rest,
 Philippo and my wife run in my mind so :
 I know no cause why I should trust him more
 Than all the world beside : I remember
 He told her that I bought the buck's-head, therefore
 Deserv'd the horns : altho' I bid him try her,
 Yet I did not bid him bid her with one eye
 Love me, and with the other wink at a friend.
 How we long to grow familiar with affliction !
 And, as many words do aptly hold concordance
 To make one sentence, just so many causes
 Seem to agree, when conceit makes us cuckolds.

Enter Philippo and Abstemia.

And here comes proof apparent, hand in hand too ;
 Now their palms meet, that grasp begets a bastard.

Philippo.

By your white hand I swear't was only so.

Lorenzo.

Poison of toads betwixt ye !

Abstemia.

Philippo, you have fully satisfy'd me.

Lorenzo.

Insatiate whore ! could not I satisfy ye ?
 I shall commit a murder, if I stay :
 I'll go forge thunder for ye. Oh let me
 Never more marry ! what plague can transcend
 A whorish wife, and a perfidious friend !

[Exit.

Philippo.

By the unblemish'd faith then of a gentleman ;
 And by your potent goodness, a great oath ;
 (For you are greatly good) by truth itself,
 (For still I swear by you) what again hath past,
 Was at the first but trial of your chastity,
 Far above time or story : as I speak truth,
 So may I prosper.

Abstemia.

And came these trials from your breast only ?

Philippo.

Only from my breast ; and by the sweet
 Excellent blush of virtue, there is in you
 Plenty of truth and goodness.

Abstemia.

Abstemia.

You have nobly
Appeas'd the storm o'ertook you ; and you are
Again a good man.

Enter Lorenzo, Pandulpho, Spinoso, Jaspro, Jovani.

Lorenzo.

Traitor to truth and friendship !
Did not mine honour hold me, I should rip out
That blushing hypocrite thy heart, that hath broke
So strong a tie of faith ; but behold,
How much of man is in me ! there I cast them
From this believing heart, to the iron hand
Of law, the wrong'd man's saint.

Philipppo.

What means this ?

Pandulpho.

My lord, here's warrant
For what's done, immediate from the duke ;
By force of which you're early i'th' morning
Before his grace to answer to such injuries
The count Lorenzo shall alledge against you.

Philipppo.

Injuries ! Why, friend, what injuries ?

Lorenzo.

Can ye spell stag, sir ? 'tis four letters with two horns.
Good gentlemen, convey him from my fury,
For fear of greater mischief.

Philipppo.

Thou yellow fool !

[*Exit.*

Abstemia.

I would you would instruct me, noble sir,
But how to understand all this.

Lorenzo.

Do ye see her ? look on her all, and wonder :
Did ye ever see so foul guilt stand underneath
A look so innocent ?

Jovani.

Jovani.
I should have pawn'd my blood upon her honour.

Pandulpho.

Colours not in grain,
Make as fair shew, but are more apt to stain.

Abstemia.

My lord.

Lorenzo.

Ye whore!

[Kicks her. She swoons.]

Jaspro.

Look to the lady.

Lorenzo.

Look to her! hang her: let me send her now
To the devil, with all her fins upon her head.

Spinofo.

Bear her in gently, and see her guarded.

Pandulpho.

You are too violent, my lord.

Lorenzo.

That men should ever marry! that we should
Lay our heads, and take our horns up out of
Women's laps!

Jovani.

Be patient, good sir.

Lorenzo.

Yes, and go make potguns.

Jaspro.

'Tis late, and sleep would do you good, my lord.

Lorenzo.

Sleep! why, do you think I am mad, sir?

Jaspro.

Not I, my lord.

Lorenzo.

Then you do lye, my lord,
For I am mad, horn mad: I shall be acted
In our theatres of Verona. Oh! what poison's
Like a false friend? and what plague more ruinous
Than a lascivious wife? they steal our joys,
And fill us with afflictions; they leave our names

Hedg'd

286 THE CITY NIGHT-CAP.

Hedg'd in with calumny : in their false hearts
Crocodiles breed; who make grief their disguise,
And, in betraying, tears still thro' their eyes.
Oh ! he that can believe he sleeps secure
In a false friend's oath, or in a bad wife's arms,
Trusts Circe's witchcraft, and Calipso's charms.

Omnes.

'Tis late, let's to the court.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

*A bed thrust out : Lodovico sleeping in his cloaths : Dorothea
in bed. Enter Clown leading in Francisco.*

Francisco.

Softly, sweet Pambo : are we in the chamber yet ?

Clown.

Within a yard of my lady, and ye can be quiet.

Francisco.

Art sure my lord's asleep ?

Clown.

I know not, I'll go and ask him.

Francisco.

No, no, no, do not wake him ; we are undone then,
man.

Clown.

Ha, ha, ha, now do I see cuckold-making is as ticklish
a profession as cunny-catching : my lord was so paid with
healths at court, he's fast enough.

Francisco.

But still I pursue wonder, why my lady should prescribe
this strange, nay wond'rous desperate way to her desires.

Clown.

Is that a question to ask now ? would you would grope
out the bed ; for I sleep in my talk, I am sure of that.

[*Lodovico coughs.*

Francisco.

Francisco.

We are lost for ever: did he not cough?

Clown.

'Tis nothing but the last cup comes up in stew'd-broth: if ever you make true whore-master, I'll be bound to resign my place up to my lord's page: sea-sick before you come to th' salt water! let me go in your stead.

Francisco.

No, I'll venture, stood a gulph between,
Belching up a tempest. Oh valiant lust!
How resolute thou go'st to acts unjust!
Pambo, good night.

Desire drowns fear, in presuppos'd delight.

Clown.

Turn of your left hand, 'twill lead you to the devil,
to my lady, I should say, presently. [Exit.

Francisco.

Let me see:

Four steps on the left hand. I have the bed,
And on this side she lies. 'Sfoot, there's a beard!
But all's well yet, she lies on this side sure.
I have her: 'tis her hand, I know the touch.
It melts me into passion. I have much ado
To contain my wild desires. As the wind strains
In caverns lock'd, so through my big swollen veins
My blood cuts capers.

Dorothea.

Who's there?

Francisco.

'Tis I.

Dorothea.

Francis!

Francisco.

Fortunate Francis, that was wrapp'd in's mother's
smock.

Dorothea.

Give me your hand, Francis.

Francisco.

There 'tis. I melt already!

Dorothea.

My lord, count Lodovico, awake.

Francisco.

I am lost for ever, madam.

Dorothea.

My lord ! my lord !

Francisco.

If I pull too hard, I shall pull her out o'th' bed too.

Dorothea.

My lord, will ye not wake ?

Lodovico.

What's the matter ? what's the matter ?

Francisco.

How I do dwindle !

Dorothea.

Pray, hear me, sir ; I cannot sleep till you
Have resolv'd me one thing.

Lodovico.

What is't, sweetheart ?

Dorothea.

Of all your men, which do you love best ?

Lodovico.

That's a strange question to ask at midnight ! *Francisco.*

Dorothea.

And that same false Francisco in your absence
Most lowly tempted me to wrong your bed.

Francisco.

Was ever woodcock catch'd thus !

Lodovico.

Oh rogue, I'll go put's throat sleeping.

Dorothea.

Nay, I have fitted him most daintily.

Francisco.

Now, now, now, now, I am spitted.

Dorothea.

I seem'd, sweetheart, to consent to him—

Francisco.

A plague of seemings : I were best confess,
And beg pardon.

Dorothea.

And to make him sure for your revenge, I appointed
About this hour, the door left open on purpose—

Francisco.

Ah !

Dorothea.

To meet me in the garden.

Francisco.

All's well again.

Dorothea.

Now, sweetheart,
If thou would'st but steal down thither, thou might'st
Catch him, and snap the fool very finely.

Lodovico.

Oh my sweet birds-nie! what a wench have I
Of thee! *Crede quod habes, & habes* still ;
And I had thought it possible to have been
Cuckolded, I had been cuckolded.
I'll take my rapier as I go, firrah ;
And the night being dark, I'll speak like thee,
As if thou hadst kept thy word. Oh villain !
Nothing vexes me, but that he should think
I can be a cuckold, and have such a lady.
Do thou lie still, and I'll bring thee his heart
For thy monkey's breakfast.

Dorothea.

And would you part unkindly, and not kiss me ?

Lodovico.

I have no more manners than a goose. Farewel,
My chaste delicious Doll. What may his life
Be compar'd to, that meets with such a wife !

[*Exit.*

Enter Clown.

Francisco.

Pish, Pambo.

Clown.

Here, boy.

Francisco.

Go meet him in the garden, and hark.

VOL. XI.

U

Clown.

Clown.

Excellent! I'll play my lady, I warrant ye.

Francisco.

Do't daintily.

Clown.

Well, I may hope for a 'squire's place; my father was a coffer-monger ⁴.

[*Exit.*

Francisco.

Well, now I see, as he who fain would know
The real strain of goodness, may in her read it,
Who can seem chaste, and can be what she seems:
So, who would see hell's craft, in her may read it,
Who can seem too, but not be what she seems.
In brief, put him to school (would cheat the de'il of's right)
To a dainty smooth-fac'd female hypocrite. [*Exit.*

Enter Lodovico and Clown.

Lodovico.

Here's a wife, Pambo!

Clown.

Now, *Crede quod habes, & habes*, fir.

Lodovico.

Why, right man: let him believe he has horns,
and he has 'em.

⁴ *Well, I may hope for a squire's place; my father was a coffer-monger.]*
A coffer-monger is a seller of apples; and an apple-squire was formerly a cant term for a pimp.

• *Erasmus's Praise of Folie.* Sign. P.

“ Or doo you judge peradventure they coulde easily synde in their
“ hertes, that so many scriveners, so many registrers, so manie notaries,
“ so many advocates, so many promoters, so many secretaries, so many
“ moysters, so many horsekeepers, so many gentlemen of householde, so
“ many *apple squiers*, so many baudes, I had almost spoken a softer
“ worde,” &c.

Faults, and norbing but Faults, by Barnaby Rich. 1606. P. 24.

“ —Shee shall not want the assistance of her ruffians, her *apple-*
“ *squires*, and of those brothell queanes that lodge, that harbour, and
“ that retain her.”

Ben Jonson's Every Man in his Humour. A. 4. S. 10.

“ Well, good wife bawd, Cob's wife, and you,

“ That make your husband such a hoddy doddy;

“ And you, young *apple-squire*, and old cuckold-maker,

“ I'll ha' you every one before a justice.”

See also *Dekker's Belman of London.* Sign. H. 2.

Clown.

Clown.

To discover upon the pinch to ye!

Lodovico.

Oh! you kind loving husbands, like myself,
What fortunes meet ye full but with such wives!

Clown.

Fortune's i'th' fashion of hay-forks.

Lodovico.

Sirrah Pambo, thou shalt seldom see a harsh fellow have
such a wife, such a fortunate wedding.

Clown.

He will go to hanging as soon.

Lodovico.

No, no; we loving souls have all the fortunes.
There's count Lorenzo for example now;
There's a sweet coil to-morrow 'bout his wife.
He has two servants that will take their oaths
They saw her dishonest with his friend count Philipppo;
Nay, in the very act. Now what was't brought her to't,
But his dogged usage of her?

Clown.

Nay, she never liv'd a good day with him.

Lodovico.

How she goes flaunting too! she must have a
feather in her head, and a cork in her heel.

Clown.

Ay, that shews her light from head to heel, fir; and
who have heavier heads than they whose wives have light
heels? that feather confounds her.

Lodovico.

I shall so laugh to hear the comical history of the great
count Lorenzo's horns; but as I have such a wife now,
what a villain did I entertain to teach her musick? H'as
done her no good since he came, that I saw.

Clown.

Hang him, h'as made her a little perfect in prick-song,
that's all; and it may be, she had skill in that before you
married her too.

Lodovico.

She could sing at the first sight, by this hand, Pambo.
But hark! I hear somebody.

292 THE CITY NIGHT-CAP.

Enter Francisco.

Clown.

'Tis he' sure ; h'as a dreaming whoremaster's pace.
Pray, let me practise my lady's part, and counterfeit for
her.

Lodovico.

Canst thou imitate to th' life ?

Clown.

Can I ? Oh wicked Francis !

Lodovico.

Admirable ! Thou shalt do't.

Clown.

Pray, be you ready with your rapier to spit him then,
and I'll watch him a good turn, I warrant ye.

Francisco.

Here they are. If Pambo now comes off with his part
neatly, the comedy passes bravely. Who's there——
madam ?

Clown.

Francis ?

Francisco.

The same.

Clown.

I think this place lies too open to the air, Francis ?

Lodovico.

Delicate, Pambo.

Clown.

And truly there's a great dew fallen to-night ;
The grass is wond'rous wet.

Lodovico.

Sweet rogue !

Clown.

Come, Francis,
And let us sport ourselves in yonder rushes ;
And being set, I'll smother thee with buffes.

Lodovico.

Oh villain !

Francisco.

Hear me, lady ;

It

It is enough, my lord hath now a friend
In these dishonest days, that dares be honest.

Lodovico.

How is this ?

Clown.

Nay, for thy lord, he's a mere coxcomb, Francis.

Lodovico.

Out, rogue !

Francisco.

'Tis but your bad desires that tell you so.
Can I contain a heart ? or can that heart
Harbour a thought of injury 'gainst him,
Under whose wing I safely stretch my pinions ?
Has he not nobly entertain'd me ? stand I not
Next neighbour, save yourself, unto his heart ?

Lodovico.

Ay, by this hand dost thou.

Francisco.

And should I quit him thus ? No, lady, no.

Lodovico.

Brave Frank !

Francisco.

I am too wise to fall in love with woe,
Much less with woman. I but took advantage
Of my lord's absence for your trial, lady,
For fear some fellow (far hotter rein'd than I)
Might have sought, and sped : and I would be loath
A lord so loving——

Lodovico.

Shalt have five leaves, by these fingers.

Francisco.

Should have a lady false.

Back, lady, to your yet unblemish'd bed ;
Preserve your honour, and your lord's——calf's-head.

[*Aside.*

Clown.

Well, Francis, you had been better—if I do not tell my
lord of this !

Lodovico.

He has put him to't now.

Francisco.

Then I am lost for ever :
You'll turn it all on me, I know ; but ere
I'll live to wrong so good a lord, or stand
The mark unto your malice, I will first
Fall on my sword and perish.

Lodovico.

Hold, hold, hold, man.

Francisco.

Ha, who are you ?

Lodovico.

One that has more humanity in him, than to see a proper fellow cast himself away, I warrant thee. 'Tis I, 'tis I, man : I have heard all.

Clown.

And 'twas I play'd my lady, to have snapp'd ye.

Francisco.

Has she been then so good to tell your honour ?
Now am I worse afflicted than before,
That she should thus outrun me in this race of honesty.

Lodovico.

Nay, sh'as bobb'd thee bravely. Sh'as a thousand of these tricks, i'faith, man : but howsoever, what I have found thee, I have found thee. Hark in thine ear, that have five leaves, and mine own nag, when th'ast a mind to ride.

Francisco.

Let me deserve, sir, first.

Lodovico.

Shalt have them. I know what I do, I warrant thee.

Francisco.

I joy in such a lady.

Lodovico.

Nay, there's a couple of you, for a wife and a friend. Shalt be no more my servant. I had thought to have made thee my steward, but thou'rt too honest for the place, that's the truth on't.

Clown.

His superfluity is my necessity : Pray, let me ha't, sir.

Lodovico.

Lodovico.

I will talk with thee to-morrow, Pambo: thou shalt have something too: but I'll to bed. Honest Francis, the dearest must part, I see. I will so hug the sweet rascal, that thinks every hour ten, till I come yonder! Good night, Frank.

To bed, Pambo. What delight in life
Can equal such a friend and such a wife?
So, my dainty Doll, I come to thee.

[*Exit.*

Clown.

So a city night-cap go with thee—But shall
I not be thought on for my night's service?

Francisco.

Oh look ye, pray forget not ye had something.

Clown.

Well, and pray do you remember I had nothing.

Francisco.

Nothing! what's that?

Francisco.

Nothing before I had something, I mean. So you are
well return'd from Utopia.

Francisco.

You're very nimble, sir; good-morrow.

[*Exit.*

A bar set out. Enter the duke of Verona, Pandulpho, Spinofo, Jaspro, Jovani, Lorenzo, Philippo, Abstemio, a guard, and two slaves.

Verona.

Call the accus'd to th' bar.

Philippo.

We appear,

With acknowledg'd reverence to the presence.

Verona.

We meet not

To build on circumstances, but to come plainly
To the business that here plac'd us. Cousin Lorenzo,
You have free leave to speak your griefs; but this
Desire the senate to observe, and nearly:
I come here not your kinsman; neither, madam,
Looking unto the greatness of your blood,

As you are sister to the duke of Venice ;
 But as an equal judge, I come to doom,
 As circumstances and proof informs.

Lorenzo.

Thus then,
 (Great sir, grave lords, and honourable auditors
 Of my dishonour) I affirm 'tis known
 To th' signory of Verona, the whole city,
 Nay, the great multitude without, that come
 This day to hear unwilling truth, can witness,
 How since my marriage with that woman (weep'st thou ?
 Oh truth, who would not look thee in a woman's tears !
 But showers that fall too late, produce dear years)
 All know that since our marriage, I have perform'd
 So fairly all judicial wedlock-offices,
 That malice knew not how at my whole actions
 To make one blow : and to strike home, I did rather
 Honour her as a saint, sir, than respect her
 As she was my wife : on pilgrimage I sent
 All my endeavours to the fair seeming shrine
 Of her desires, where they did offer daily
 A plenal satisfaction, which she seem'd
 Reciprocally to return, pay'd back
 As much obedience as I lent of love :
 But then the serpent stings, when like a dove
 Opinion feathers him : womens sweet words^s
 As far are from their hearts (though from their breasts
 They fly) as lapwings' cries are from their nests.

Pandulpho.

Oh you inveigh !

Lorenzo.

I would appear no satyr.
 And for this man (how fain I would call him friend !)
 I appeal to the whole state, if at the sight
 Betwixt Bizerta gallies and your grace,
 Wherein you pleas'd to send me general there,
 That he deserv'd (let me not take from him

^s *Women's sweet words, &c.*] See note to Alexander and Campaspe,
 A. 2. S. 2. vol. 2. P. 105.

THE CITY NIGHT-CAP. 297

His merit's meet confession) but I was there
 The man (the erring man) that crown'd his merit
 With approbation and reward; brought him home,
 Prefer'd him to those graces you heap'd on him:
 Wore him a neighbour to my heart, as lovers
 Wear jewels, left by their dead friends; I lock'd him
 Into my heart, and double-barr'd him there
 With reason and opinion: his extremities
 Fasten'd me more unto him, whilst like an arch
 Well built, by how much the more weight I bore,
 I stand the stronger under him; so lov'd him,
 That in his absence still mine ear became
 A sanctuary to his injur'd name.

Verona.

And what from hence infer you?

Lorenzo.

That 'twas base,
 Base in the depth of baseness, for this wife
 So honour'd, and this smooth friend so belov'd,
 To conspire betwixt them my dishonour.

Verona.

How?

Lorenzo.

To stain my sheets with lust, a minute's theft:
 To brand perpetually three faces; a husband's,
 A wife's, and friend's.

Abstemio.

Oh, good my lord,
 Cast, out this devil from you.

Lorenzo.

Oh, good my lady,
 Keep not the devil within you, but confess.

Philippo.

Hear me, great sir; I will confess, Lorenzo,
 And print thee down the fool of passion.

Spinofo.

Speak, sir.

Philippo.

'Tis true, this boasting man did thus erect me
 In his opinion, plac'd me in his love,
 And thus I was made his

Grac'd me with courtesies : Oh the craft of jealousy !
 As boys, to take the bird, about the pit
 Cast wheat and chaff, contriving a neat train
 To intice her to her ruin : so this friend
 Falser than city-oaths, it is not doubted,
 Having so far indear'd me, when he came
 'To enjoy a fair wife, guest it impossible
 For me to share with him in all things else,
 And not in her ; (for fair wives oft we see
 Strike discord in sweet friendship's harmony :)
 And having no way to insnare me so,
 To separate our loves, he seriously
 Woo'd me to try his wife.

Lorenzo.

'Tis false.

Philippo.

'Tis true,
 By all that honest men may be believed by.
 Three several times I try'd her, by him urg'd to't,
 Yet still my truth not started, kept so constant,
 That till this hour this lady thus much knew not.
 I bore her brave reproofs : Oh when she spake,
 The saints sure listen'd, and at every point
 She got the plause of angels ! now upon this,
 This jealous lord infers (and it may be but
 To shun futurity) that I
 (His betray'd friend) could not hold the cup,
 But I must drink the poison. No, Lorenzo,
 An honest man is still an unmov'd rock,
 Wash'd whiter, but not shaken with the shock ;
 Whose heart conceives no sinister device,
 Fearless he plays with flames, and treads on ice.

Verona.

Cousin, did you, as your friend here affirms,
 Counsel him to these trials ?

Lorenzo.

I ?

Philippo.

You did.

Lorenzo.

Philippo, thou art fallen from a good man,

And hast ta'en leave of modesty : let these my servants
(That incredulity should be induction
To my more certain shame) let these speak
And relate what they saw : they grew so public,
My servants could discover them.

Pandulpho.

Speak, friends, be fearless ;
And what you know, even to a syllable,
Boldly confess.

First Slave.

Then know, great sir, as soon
As e'er my lord was gone to meet your grace,
Signor Philipppo and my lady privately
Went up to her bed-chamber : we two suspecting
What afterwards we found, stole softly up,
And through the key-hole (for the door was lock'd)
We saw my lady and count Philipppo there
Upon the bed, and in the very act,
As my lord before affirm'd.

Abstemia.

Canst thou hear, Heaven,
And withhold thy thunder ?

Philipppo.

My lords, one devil, ye know,
May possess three bodies.

Verona.

Will you swear this, sir ?

First Slave.

I will, my lord.

Spinofo.

And you ?

Second Slave.

I will, and dare, sir.

Lorenzo.

Brave rascals !

Verona.

Reach them the book.

Abstemia.

Ye poor deluded men, oh do not swear !

Lorenzo.

Lorenzo.

Think of the chain of pearl.

First Slave.

Give us the book :

That we affirm the truth, the whole truth,
And nothing but the truth, we swear.

Pandulpho.

Believe me, I am sorry for the lady.

Philippo.

How soon

Two souls, more precious than a pair of worlds,
Are levell'd below death !

Abstemia.

Oh hark ! did you not hear it ?

Omnes.

What, lady ?

Abstemia.

This hour a pair of glorious towers are fallen ;
Two goodly buildings beaten with a breath
Beneath the grave : you all have seen this day,
A pair of souls both cast and kist away.

Spinoso.

What censure gives your grace ?

Verona.

In that I am kinsman

To the accuser, that I might not appear
Partial in judgment, let it seem no wonder
If unto your gravities I leave
The following sentence : but as Lorenzo stands
A kinsman to Verona, so forget not,
Abstemia still is sister unto Venice.

Philippo.

Misery of goodness !

Abstemia.

Oh ! Lorenzo Medico,
Abstemia's lover once, when he did vow
And when I did believe ; then when Abstemia
Deny'd so many princes for Lorenzo,

Then

Then when you swore.—Oh maids ! how men can weep !
Print protestations on their breasts, and sigh,
And look so truly, and then weep again,
And then protest again, and again dissemble !
When once enjoy'd, like strange sights we grow stale,
And find our comforts like their wonder, fail.

Philippo.

Oh Lorenzo !

Look upon tears, each one of which well valued,
Is worth the pity of a king ; but thou
Art harder far than rocks, and canst not prize
The precious waters of truth's injur'd eyes.

Lorenzo.

Please your grace proceed to censure.

Verona.

Thus 'tis decreed, as these lords have set down
Against all contradiction: Signor Philippo,
In that you have thus grossly, sir, dishonour'd
Even our blood itself, in this rude injury
Lights on our kinsman, his prerogative
Implies death on your trespass ; but your merit,
Of more antiquity than is your trespass,
That death is blotted out, and in the place
Banishment writ, perpetual banishment
(On pain of death (if you return) for ever)
From Verona, and her signories.

Philippe.

Verona is kind.

Pandulpho.

Unto you, madam,
This censure is allotted: Your high blood
Takes off the danger of the law ; nay from
Even banishment itself: this lord your husband
Sues only for a legal fair divorce,
Which we think good to grant, the church allowing:
And in that the injury chiefly reflects
On him, he hath free licence to marry when
And whom he pleases.

Abstemio.

302 THE CITY NIGHT-CAP.

Abstemia.

I thank ye,
That you are favourable unto my love,
Whom yet I love and weep for.

Philippo.

Farewell, Lorenzo.

This breast did never yet harbour a thought
Of thee, but man was in it, honest man ;
There's all the words that thou art worth : of your grace
I humbly thus take leave : farewell, my lords :
And lastly farewell, thou fairest of many,
Yet by far more unfortunate : look up
And see a crown held for thee ; win it, and die
Love's martyr, the sad map of injury :
And so remember, sir, your injur'd lady
Has a brother yet in Venice.

[*Exit.*

Abstemia.

Farewell, Lorenzo,

Whom my soul doth love : if you e'er marry,
May you meet a good wife, so good, that you
May not suspect her, nor may she be worthy
Of your suspicion : and if you hear hereafter
That I am dead, enquire but my last words,
And you shall know that to the last I lov'd you ;
And when you walk forth with your second choice,
Into the pleasant fields, and by chance talk of me,
Imagine that you see me lean and pale,
Strewing your paths with flowers : and when in bed
You cast your arms about her happy side,
Think you see me stand with a patient look,
Crying, all hail, you lovers, live and prosper :
But may she never live to pay my debts :
If but in thought she wrong you, may she die
In the conception of the injury.

[*Weeps.*

Pray make me wealthy with one kiss : farewell, sir :
Let it not grieve you when you shall remember
That I was innocent : nor this forget,
Though innocence here suffer, sigh and groan,
She walks but thorow thorns to find a throne.

[*Exit.*

Verona.

Break up the court ; and, cousin, learn this reed ;

Who

Who stabs truth's bosom, makes an angel bleed.

Lorenzo.

The storm upon my breast, sir.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Lodovico, Jaspro, Jovani, and Clown.

Lodovico.

DID chronicle ever match this couple, gentlemen?

Jaspro.

You make us wonder,
That both should seem to yield to the temptation,
And both so meet in one resolv'd goodness,
Unknown to one another!

Lodovico.

There lies the jest on't. Sirrah, Pambo, I do but think, an' she had met him in the garden, how she would have rattled him.

Clown.

And ruffled him too, sir: the camomile⁶ would have been better for it many a day after.

⁶ *The camomile would have been better for it.*] The camomile is said to grow faster the more it is pressed or trodden upon, and to this circumstance the clown here alludes. Frequent notice is taken of this property in the plant by our ancient writers. As in "*Honours Academic, or the famous pastorall of the Faire Shepheardesse Julietta*," 1610. P. 204. 5th part.

"But as gold taken out of the burning furnace, is farre more bright and fierce, than when it was first slung in; and as *Camomell*, the more it is trod upon, the thicker and better it groweth: even so we see this faire Archeresh to shew more cleare and beautifull, when the flame was once past and gone then she had bene before."

First part Henry IV. A. 2. S. 4.

"— for though the camomile, the more it is trodden on, the faster it grows, yet youth, the more it is wasted, the sooner it wears."

See other instances in the notes of Mr. Steevens and Dr. Farmer on the last passage.

Jovani.

THE CITY NIGHT-CAP.

Jovani.

Such an honest-minded servant where shall one find?

Lodovico.

Servant! my sworn brother, man; he's too honest for an office, he'll never thrive in't: ye have few servants will deal so mercifully with their lords.

Jaspro.

A wife! why she's a saint, one that ever bears a good sound soul about her.

Clown.

Yes, when she wears her new shoes.

Jovani.

Shall we see her, my lord?

Lodovico.

Where is she, Pambo?

Clown.

Walking a turn or two i'th' garden with Francisco, fir: I'll go call her.

Lodovico.

No, no, no; let her alone; 'tis pity indeed to part them, they are so well match'd. Was he not reading to her?

Clown.

No, fir, she was weeping to him: she heard this morning that her confessor, father Jacomo, was dead.

Jaspro.

Father Jacomo dead?

Lodovico.

Why now shall not we have her eat one bit this five ca

Clown.

She'll munch the more in a corner; that's the puritan's fast.

Lodovico.

Nay, do but judge of her, my lords, by one thing: whereas most of our dames go to confession but once a month, some twice a quarter, and some but once a year, and that upon constraint too, she never misses twice a week.

Jaspro.

'Tis wonderful!

Jovani.

Jovani.

'Tis a sign she keeps all well at home: they are even
With the whole world, that so keep touch with Heaven.

Lodovico.

Nay, I told ye, ye should find no Philippo of Francisco.

Clown.

And I remember I told your honour you should find no Abstemia of my lady.

Lodovico.

Nor no Lorenzo of myself: he was ever a melancholy stubborn fellow; he kept her in too much, and see what comes on't! I give my wife her will, and see what comes on't too!

Clown.

Nay, fir, there is two come on't, an' a man could discover 'em.

Lodovico.

Two what, I pr'ythee!

Clown.

It may be two babies, fir; for they come commonly with giving a woman her will.

Lodovico.

I'd laugh at that, 'faith, boy—But who has she now for her confessor?

Clown.

She looks for one, they call him father Antony, fir; and he's wish'd to her by madona Luffuriosa.

Enter Dorothea and Francisco.

Lodovico.

There's another modest soul too, never without a holy man at her elbow! But here comes one out-weighs them all—Why, how now, chick, weeping so fast? This is the fault of most of our ladies; painting, weeping for their sins I should say, spoils their faces.

Francisco.

Sweet madam!

Lodovico.

Look, look, look, loving soul, he weeps for company!

VOL. XI.

X

Clown.

Clown.

And I shall laugh out-right by-and-by.

Dorothea.

Oh that good man !

Lodovico.

Why, bird ?

Jaspro.

Be patient, lady.

Dorothea.

Would he go to heaven without his zealous pupil ?

Clown.

It may be he knew not your mind, forsooth.

Dorothea.

He knew my mind well enough.

*Clown.*Why then it may be he knew you could not hold out for the journey : pray do not set us all a crying. [*Weeps.*]*Lodovico.*

Pr'ythee, sweet birds-nye, be content.

*Dorothea.*Yes, yes, content ! when you too leave my company !
No one comes near me ; so that were it not
For modest simple Francis here——*Clown.*

As modest as a gib-cat at midnight.

*Dorothea.*That sometimes reads
Virtuous books to me ; were it not for him,
I might go look content ; but 'tis no matter,
Nobody cares for me.*Lodovico.*

Nay, pr'ythee, Doll—pray, gentlemen, comfort her.

[*Weeps.*]*Clown.*Now is the devil writing an encomium upon cunning
cuckold-makers.*Francisco.*

You have been harsh to her of late, I fear, sir.

*Lodovico.*By this hand I turn'd not from her all last night : what
should a man do ?*Jaspro.*

Jaspro.

Come, this is but a sweet obedient shower,
To bedew the lamented grave of her old father.

Clown.

He thinks the devil's dead too.

Dorothea.

But 'tis no matter; were I such a one
As the count Lorenzo's lady, were I so graceless
To make you wear a pair of wicked horns,
You would make more reckoning of me — [Weeps.

Lodovico.

Weep again! She'll cry out her eyes, gentlemen.

Clown.

No, I warrant you: remember the two lines your honour read last night:

————— *A woman's eye,*

'S April's dust, no sooner wet but dry.

Lodovico.

Good pigs-nye! Frank, pr'ythee walk her t'other turn
i'th' garden, and get her a stomach to her supper. We'll
be with ye presently, wench.

Dorothea.

Nay, when ye please — But why should I go from ye?

Lodovico.

Loving soul! Pr'ythee, Frank, take her away.

Dorothea.

Pray let me kiss ye first. Come, Francis,
Nobody cares for us. — [At the door Francis kisses her.
[Exeunt.

Lodovico.

Well, there goes a couple: where shall a man match
you, indeed? Hark, Pambo!

Jaspro.

Did you observe?

Jovani.

They kiss'd!

Jaspro.

Peace.

Lodovico.

And intreat madona Lussuriosa to sup with us; as
X 2 you

you go, tell her my lady's never well but in her company.

Clown.

What if your honour invited the count Lorenzo ? he'll be so melancholy, now his lady and he are parted !

Lodovico.

Pray do as you are bid, kind sir, and let him alone : I'll have no cuckold sup in my house to-night.

Clown.

'Tis a very hot evening ; your honour will sup in the garden then.

Lodovico.

Yes, marry, will I, sir ; what's that to you ?

Clown.

Why your honour was ever as good as your word : Keep the cuckolds out of door, and lay a cloth for my lord in the arbour, gentlemen. [Exit.

Lodovico.

I have been this three months about a project.

Jovani.

What is't, my lord ?

Lodovico.

Why, I intend to compose a pamphlet of all my wife's virtues, put them in print, and dedicate them to the duke, as orthodoxal directions against he marries.

Jaspro.

'Twill give him apt instructions, when he does marry, to pick out such a woman.

Lodovico.

Pick her ! where will he pick her ? as the English proverb says, *He may as soon find a needle in a bottle of hay.* Would I knew what sins she has committed, I would set them down all one with another ; they would serve as foils to her virtues : but I do think she has none : d'ye think she has any, gentlemen ?

Jovani.

Oh, none, sir, but has some !

Lodovico.

Ay, piddling ones, it may be ; as when a pin pricks her

her finger to cry at sight on't, and throw't away ; but for other matters——

Jaspro.

Now I think on't, fir, I have a device newly begotten, that, if you be so desirous to be resolv'd of her perfections, 'twill be an apt means for your intelligence.

Lodovico.

That will be excellent ; and then my book, grounded upon mine own experience, the report of my judgment in the choice of a woman, will sell them off faster than the compositor can set the letters together.

Jaspro.

We will discourse it as we go : mean time, fir, Let this prepare the path to your construction. Conceit and confidence are jugglers' born ; One grafts in air, t'other hides the real horn.

Lodovico.

Well, he that believes he has horns, has horns ; And *crede quod babes & babes*, shall be my motto.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Pandulpho and Spinofo.

Spinofo.

The powers of Venice upon our confines !

Pandulpho.

Yes ; signor Philippe, it seems, having possess'd him⁷ With the passages that pass'd upon his sister, Embassadors were dispatch'd to Bergamo, Where then his forces lay ; who thus return'd, That he came not a public foe unto Verona, But to require justice against count Lorenzo, To approve his sister innocent.

Spinofo.

What witness, Proof, or apparent circumstance, builds he His bold attempt upon ?

⁷ —having possess'd him] That is, acquainted, or informed him. So in *Every Man in his Humour*, A. 1. S. 5. Bodadil says, " Possess no gentleman of our acquaintance with notice of my lodging."

Beaumont and Fletcher's Honest Man's Fortune, A. 2. S. 1.

" Sir, I am very well possess of it."

Pandulpho.

He says, besides
 The honour of Philippo, he has proof
 So unrefutable to affirm the plot
 Of count Lorenzo, that he only crav'd
 (Hostages being render'd for their safe returns)
 Here in the senate chamber the fair trial,
 Might publicly be censur'd: and by this
 They are at hand.

*Enter at one door duke of Venice, Philippo, and lords. At
 the other, duke of Verona, Jaspro, Jovani, Lorenzo
 guarded. A bar set out. The 1st slave.*

Verona.

Fair sir, the presence is level'd for your grievances.

Venice.

First summon to the bar the count Lorenzo.

Pandulpho.

Lorenzo Medico, stand to the bar.

Lorenzo.

I do stand to the bar.

Venice.

I come not here, witness the good man's comfort,
 To add one step unto my territories; and tho' I burden
 The neighbour-bosom of my confines with
 The weight of armour, or do wound your breast
 (My dukedom's near next neighbour) with the hoofs
 Of war-apparell'd horses, 'tis not to seek
 For martial honours, but for civil justice:
 Conceive mine honour wounded; a sister's shame
 Is an unpleasant spot upon our arms;
 Yet that we come not here to sanctify
 A sister's sin; for if she be so prov'd,
 Shame sleep within her epitaph, and brand her;
 Let bears and wolves that angel's face confound,
 Gives goodness such a foul unfriendly wound:
 But if she chaste be prov'd, what balm can cure
 A wounded name? As he that not inflicts
 The bitter stroke of law upon the strumpet,
 Fattens the sad afflictions of a thousand:

So who but stains an honest woman's name,
 Plagues are yet kept for him, steel is no defence,
 For the unclean tongue injures innocence.
 I affirm my sister wrong'd, wrong'd by this man,
 This that has wrong'd pure judgment, and thrown poison
 Upon the face of truth ; and upon him
 I seek a satisfaction.

Lorenza.

I reply ;
 The law must give you satisfaction,
 That justly did divorce us : I appeal
 To the whole consiliatory, if equal law,
 In her progression, went a step astray,
 Either by proof or information.
 Let the duke speak (not as he is my kinsman)
 If I produc'd not legally in court,
 Besides mine own assertion, (which even reason
 Grounded on probability) two of my servants,
 That upon oath affirm'd they saw your sister
 Even in the very act of sin and shame,
 With that Philippo there : blame me not then, sir,
 If I return an error to your cause.
 Reason (the base whereon we build the laws)
 You injure in this action, give her the lye :
 Who dares not build his faith upon his eye ?
 They swore what they did see ; and men still fear,
 (Reason concludes) what they not see, to swear.

Verona.

You hear my kinsman's answer.

Pandulpha.

And 'tis requisite
 That you produce your author : it is held
 Mere madness on a hill of sand to build.

Philippo.

The foundation-work is mine,
 And that I answer : he builds on truth,
 The good man's mistress, and not in the sanctuary
 Of this injur'd brother's power, but the integrity
 And glory of the cause : I throw the pawn
 Of my afflicted honour, and on that

X 4

I openly

I openly affirm your absent lady
 Chastity's well-knit abstract ; snow in the fall,
 Purely refin'd by the bleak northern blast,
 Not free from a soil ; the thoughts of infants
 But little nearer Heaven ; and if these princes
 Please to permit, before their guilty thoughts
 Injure another hour upon the lady,
 My right drawn sword shall prove it.

Lorenzo.

Upon my knee, sir,
 (How my soul dances !) humbly I intreat
 Your grant to his request : fight with Philipppo
 I'th' midst of flame, or pestilence ; in a cave,
 Where basilisks do breed.

Verona.

We must take counsel :
 The price of blood is precious.

Lorenzo.

Blood desires burthen :
 The price of truth is precious. For all the fights
 I have fought for you on land ; the fears at sea,
 Where I have tugg'd with tempests, stood storms at mid-
 night,
 Out-star'd the flaring lightning, and the next morning
 Chas'd the unruly stubborn Turk with thunder ;
 For all the bullets I have bravely shot,
 And sent death singing to the slaughter, sir—

Verona.

Peace.

Lorenzo.

What should a soldier do with peace ? remember
 Mine honour lies a bleeding, and in mine yours ;
 Her wide wound inward bleeds ; and while you cry peace,
 Shame wars upon my name : oh, rather kill me,
 Than cast me to this scandal.

Spinoza.

The doubtful cause,
 With such a dare approv'd, you may permit it.

Verona.

Your request is granted, coz.

Lorenzo.

Lorenzo.

You have now, fir, breath'd
Fresh air in the face of fainting honour.
Rapiers of fair equality.

Verona.

Look with what cunning
The spider, when she would snare the fly, doth weave!
With neater art appearances deceive.
Stay, as you said, fir, blood is a precious price:
Let me but see the men produc'd, who swore
They saw them in the shameful act; and then
Farewell a sister and her honour.

Paululpho.

Produce your servants, fir. [*Venice sends off a lord.*]

Lorenzo.

Plague of this change! here's one of them; the t'other,
In that I threaten'd him for some neglect,
The next day ran away.

Venice.

Did you, fir, swear
You saw our sister and this gentleman
In this base act of sin?

Lorenzo.

Fear nothing.

First Slave.

To deny truth,
Is more dangerous than to displease a duke;
I saw it, and did swear it.

Enter Lord, and Second Slave.

Venice.

But here comes one
Will swear you saw it not, and are forsworn.

First Slave.

'Sfoot, Stratzo!

Spinofo.

This is the other fellow took his oath,

Verona.

What come you here to say, fir?

Second

Second Slave.

That we swore falsely, may it please your grace;
 Hir'd by my lord with gifts and promises:
 And as I now have spoke the truth, so Heaven
 Forgive my former perjury.

Verona.

Hear you, confin?

First Slave.

Would you would say something: I have nettles in my breeches.

Lorenzo.

Now, now, I hope, your eyes are open, lords;
 The bed of snakes is broke, the trick's come out,
 And here's the knot i'th' ruff. Good Heaven, good
 Heaven!

That craft, in seeking to put on disguise,
 Should so discover herself!

Verona.

• Explain yourself!

Lorenzo.

Now see, sir, where this scorpion lurks, to sting
 Mine honour unto death: this noble duke
 By nature is engag'd to defend a sister;
 And to this duke so engag'd, this malicious lord
 (For sin still hates her scourger) makes repair,
 And prepossesses him with that suppos'd innocence
 Of an injur'd sister, which he had hir'd this slave
 To follow him and affirm, and lays the cause
 To scruple, and to conscience: they did consent
 To steal belief by seeming accident.
 Sin, juggler-like, casts sin before our eyes;
 Craft sometimes steals the wonder of the wise.
 With an equal hand now weigh me, and if I want
 A grain of honour, tear me from your blood,
 And cast me to contempt.

First Slave.

My lord would have made an excellent state-sophister.

Verona.

In what a strange dilemma judgment sits,
 Charm'd to her chair with wonder!

Venice.

Venice.

Shall I have justice ?

Randulpho.

Yes, in that this fellow swears for the duke ;
Reach him the book ; you shall see him again
Take the former oath.

Verona.

This doubt must be so ended :
If it give not satisfaction, send back our hostage ;
You have fair regrefs to your forces : but
The blood remains on you ; and still remember
The price of blood is precious.

Philippo.

Let us end it.

Venice.

Oh, what a combat honour holds with conscience !
Reach him the book ; and if thou false do'st say,
May thine own tongue thine own foul heart betray.

First Slave.

Amen, say I :
Give me the book ; my oath must end all then ?

Spinofo.

It must.

Lorenzo.

Now you shall hear him swear
He saw them both in the base act.

First Slave.

Nay, I swear
They are now both seen in the base act.

Omnes.

How's this ?

Pandulpho.

'Tis a strange oath.

First Slave.

'Tis true, tho'.

Lorenzo.

True, villain ! are both now seen in the base act ?

First Slave.

Yes, both.

Lorenzo.

Which both ?

First

First Slave.

You and I, fir.

Omnes.

How?

First Slave.

Both you and I are seen in the base act,
Slandering spotless honour; an act so base,
The barbarous Moor would blush at.

Philippo.

D'ye hear him now?

Lorenzo.

Out, slave, wilt thou give ground too? fear works
upon 'em:

Did you not both here swear, i'th' senate-chamber,
You saw them both dishonest?

First Slave.

Then we swore true, fir.

Lorenzo.

I told you 'twas but fear.

Verona.

Swore ye true then, fir, when ye swore
Ye both saw them dishonest?

First Slave.

Yes, marry, did we, fir;
For we were both two villains when we saw them,
So we saw them dishonest.

Venice.

Heaven, thou art equal!

First Slave.

This is a jealous lord; his lady chaste,
A rock of crystal not more clear; this gentleman
Basely abus'd; this great prince dishonour'd;
And so we kneel for mercy.

Verona.

You have redeem'd it:
Depart, prove honest men. That I should bear
Dishonour in my blood!

Omnes.

Much-injur'd lady!

Venice.

What justice, fir, belongs unto the injur'd?

Verona.

Verona.

First, witness Heaven, I tear thee from my blood,
 And cast thee off a stranger: assume you, fir,
 (Since the great cause is yours) my seat of justice,
 And sentence this foul homicide: it must be,
 And suddenly; he will infect the air else.
 Proceed, great fir, with rigour, whilst I stand by,
 And do adore the sentence.

Venice.

Answer, Lorenzo,
 Art thou not guilty?

Lorenzo.

Give me my merit, death;
 Princes can build and ruin with one breath.

Venice.

The cause may seem to merit death, in that
 Two souls were hazarded, a princess' fame,
 A duke dishonour'd, and a noble lord
 Wounded in reputation; but since she lives,
 And that no blood was spilt, (tho' something dearer)
 Mercy thus far stretches her silver wings
 Over your trespass; we do banish you,
 Both from our dukedom's limits and your own:
 If you but set a daring foot upon them,
 Whilst life lends you ability to stand,
 You fall into the pit of death, unless
 You shall find out our most unfortunate sister,
 And bring her to our court.

Lorenzo.

You, fir, are merciful!

Verona.

This let me add,
 In that you have made impartial justice, fir,
 Princes should punish vice in their own blood:
 Until you find that excellent injur'd lady,
 Upon this gentleman, who hath suffer'd for you,
 We confer your lands, revenues, and your place:
 That, during three days stay within our confines,
 It shall be death to any that relieves you,
 But as they do a beggar at their door:
 So cast him from our presence.

Lorenzo.

Lorenzo.

Your dooms are just !
 Oh love, thy first destruction is distrust !

[*Exeunt Lorenzo, Jaspro, and Jovani.*
Verona.

For you, fair sir, until we shall hear tidings
 Of your most-injur'd sister, please you to call
 My court your own ; conceive it so ; where live :
 Two partners in one passion we will be,
 And sweeten sorrow with a sympathy. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lodovico like a frier, Jaspro, and Jovani.

Lodovico.

What, am I fitted, gallants ? am I fitted ?

Jaspro.

To th' life ; able to cheat suspicion, and so like
 Father Antony the confessor, that I protest
 There's not more 'semblance in a pair of eggs.

Jovani.

An apple cut in half, is not so like.

Lodovico.

Well, of lords, you're mad lords to counsel me to this ;
 but now, in this habit, shall I know the very core of her
 heart, and her little piddling sins, which will shew in my
 book as foils to her giant-bodied virtues.

Jaspro.

That will be admirable !

Jovani.

We'll keep aside : by this she's upon coming.

Jaspro.

We shall know all.

Lodovico.

Reveal confession ! but go your ways ; as much as may
 lawfully be reveal'd, we'll laugh at, at next meeting.

Jaspro.

Come, let's be gone. But once upon a time, sir,
 A beggar found a lark's nest ; and o'erjoy'd
 At his sudden glut, for he thought 'twas full of young
 ones,

Looking, they were all gone ; he was forc'd again to beg,
 For

THE CITY NIGHT-CAP. 319.

For he found in the lark's nest a serpent's egg ;
So much good d'ye, sir.— [Exit.

Enter Dorothea.

Lodovico.

Well, thou surpassest all the courtiers in these pretty ones, if a man had the wit to understand them—

Yonder she comes : I can hardly forbear blushing,
But that for discovering myself.

Right reverend habit, I honour thee
With a son's obedience, and do but borrow thee,
As men would play with flies, who, i'th' midst
Of modest mirth, with care preserve themselves.

Dorothea.

Hail, holy father !

Lodovico.

Welcome, my chaste daughter !

Dorothea.

Death having taken good father Jacomo,
Upon the plenial and approv'd report
Of your integrity and upright dealing—

Lodovico.

Delicate Doll !

Dorothea.

I have made a modest choice of you, grave sir,
To be my ghostly father ; and to you I fall
For absolution.

Lodovico.

Empty then, my daughter,
That vessel of your flesh of all the dregs
Which (since your last confession clear'd you) have
Taken a settled habitation in you ;
And, with a powerful sweet acknowledgment,
Hunt out those spirits which haunt that house of flesh.
Tears make dry branches flourish green and fresh.

Dorothea.

Since last I confess'd, then I do confess
My first sin was, that my taylor bringing home
My last new gown, having made the sleeves too flaring,
In an unchristian passion I did bid
The devil take him.

Lodovico.

Lodovico.

That was something harsh, dear daughter ;
Yet the more pardonable ; for it may be your taylor
Lies in hell, night by night. Pray, to your second.

Dorothea.

Next, in a more savage rage, my chamber-maid
Putting a little saffron in her starch²,
I most unmercifully broke her head.

Lodovico.

'Twas rashly done too. But are you sure, dear
daughter,
The maid's head was not broke before ?

Dorothea.

No, no, sir ; she came to me with ne'er a crack about
her.

Lodovico.

These will be brave sins to mix with her virtues ! Why
they will make no more shew than three or four bailiffs
amongst a company of honest men.—These sins, my dove-
like daughter, are out of contradiction venial, trivial, and
light. Have you none of greater growth ?

Dorothea.

Oh, yes, sir, one !

Lodovico.

One ! What should that be, I wonder ?

Dorothea.

One yet remains behind
Of weight and consequence : the same order
Heralds prescribe in shews, I now observe
In placing of my sins ; as there inferiours
(Because the last lives freshest in our memories)—
Far fore the persons of great note³, so last
My great sin comes to obliterate those past.

Lodovico.

Sh'as trod some chicken to death, I warrant her.

² Putting a little saffron in her starch.] See note on Albumazar. A. 2.
S. 1. vol. 6.

³ Far fore.] i. e. before. Former editions, read *Far more*. S. P.

Dorothea.

Dorothea.

Hear me, and let a blush make you look red ;
Unseemly I have abus'd my husband's bed.

Lodovico.

You did ill to drink too hard ere you went to bed.

Dorothea.

Alas, fir, you mistake me : I have lain
With another man, besides my husband.

Lodovico.

How ?

Dorothea.

Nay, the same way I use to lie with him,
But not altogether so often.

Lodovico.

Why then, *crede quod habes, & habes*, I will believe
I have horns, for I have 'em. 'Sfoot, a woman, I per-
ceive, is a neat herald ; she can quarter her husband's coat
with butcher's arms at pleasure. But I have a penance for
your pure whoreship.—You are somewhat broad : are you
not with child, daughter ?

Dorothea.

Yes, yes ; sure 'twas that night's work.

Lodovico.

How know you that ?

Dorothea.

Alas, by experience, fir. The kind fool my husband
Wishes all well ; but like a light piece of gold,
He's taken for more than he weighs.

Lodovico.

With child ! there's charges too : a f'other side there
should follow

A zealous exhortation : but great affairs
That brook no stay, make me be brief, rememb'ring
Lawful necessity may dispense with ceremony.
You are ingenuously sorry ?

Dorothea.

Yes, indeed, fir.

Lodovico.

And resolve to fall no more so ?

Dorothea.

No, in truth, fir.

Lodovico.

I then pronounce you here absolv'd. Now for your penance.

Dorothea.

Any thing.

Lodovico.

As the fact in you seems strange, so blame me not
If your penance be as strange. You may wonder at it ;
But it is wonderous easy in performance ;
But as your penance I injoin it. Nay, now I remember
In an old French authentic author, his book
'Titled, *De Satisfactione*, I read the same
Enjoin'd a lady of Dauphin. 'Tis no holy fast,
No devout prayer, nor no zealous pilgrimage ;
'Tis out of the prescrib'd road.

Dorothea.

Let it be
So strange story ne'er match'd the injunction,
I do vow the plenal strict performance.

Lodovico.

Listen to me.
Soon at night (so rumour spreads it thro' the city)
The two great dukes of Venice and Verona
Are feasted by your lord, where a mask's intended.

Dorothea.

That's true, fir,

Lodovico.

Now, when ye all are set round about the table,
In depth of silence, you shall confess these words
Aloud to your husband ; *you are not this child's father :*
And, 'cause my orders bar me such inquisition,
You shall say, such a man lay with me,
Naming the party was partner in your sin.

Dorothea.

Good fir !

Lodovico.

This is your penance I injoin you ; keep it,

You

THE CITY NIGHT-CAP. 323

You are absolv'd; break it, you know the danger of it.
Good-by.

Dorothea.

Oh, good fir, stay! never was penance of more shame
than this.

Lodovico.

You know the danger of the breach as to us:
'Tis the shameful loss of our religious orders, if we reveal.

Dorothea.

For Heaven's sake,
Enjoin me first upon my knees to creep
From Verona to Loretto.

Lodovico.

That's nothing.

Dorothea.

Nothing indeed to this. Is this your penance,
So wond'rous easy in performance?

Lodovico.

'Tis irrevocable.

Dorothea.

I am silent: your new penance may meet
A new performance. Farewell, fir.
You are the cruel't e'er confest me before.

Lodovico.

And this the trick to catch a neat pure whore.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter Abstemia.

Abstemia.

HERE, miserable, despis'd Abstemia,
In Milan let thy misery take breath,
Wearied with many sufferings. Oh Lorenzo!
How far in love I am with my affliction,
Because it calls thee father! Unto this house

Y 2

Where

Where gentlewomen lodge, I was directed ;
 But I here discover
 Strange actions closely carried in this house.
 Great persons (but not good) here nightly revel
 In surfeits, and in riots, yet so carried,
 That the next day the place appears a sanctuary
 Rather than sin's foul receptacle. These ways
 Have to me still been strangers ; but, Lorenzo,
 Thou couldst not though believe it. Oh Jealousy !
 Love's eclipse, thou art, in thy disease,
 A wild mad patient, wond'rous hard to please.

Enter Timpania and Morbo.

Morbo.

Yonder she walks mumbling to herself. The prince
 Antonio has blest her with's observation ; and ye win her
 but to him, your house bears the bell away. Accost her
 quaintly.

Timpania.

I warrant thee, Morbo, Madona Timpania has effected
 wonders of more weight than a maidenhead. Have I
 ruin'd so many city-citadels, to let in court-martialists,
 and shall this country-cottage hold out ? I were more fit
 for a cart than a coach then, i'faith. — How now, Milli-
 cent, how d'ye this morning ?

Abstemia.

Well, I do thank so good a landlady.

Timpania.

But hark you, Mill ; is the door close, Morbo ?

Morbo.

As a usurer's conscience. Grace was coming in, till she
 saw the door shut upon her.

Timpania.

I'll set Grace about her business, and I come to her.
 Is here any work for Grace, with a wannion to her¹⁰ ? We
 shall have eaves-droppers, shall we ?

Abstemia.

¹⁰ ———with a wannion to her.] This expression occurs in *Pericles*
Prince of Tyre, A. 2. S. 1.

Abstemia.

Chastity guard me! how I tremble!

Timpania.

Come hither, mistress Millicent. Fie, how you let your hair hang about your ears too! How do you like my house, Mill?

Abstemia.

Well indeed, well.

Timpania.

Nay, I know a woman may rise here in one month, and she will herself. But truth's truth: I know you see something, as they say, and so forth. Did you see the gallant was here last till twelve?

Abstemia.

Which of them mean you? here was many.

Timpania.

Which? he in the white feather, that supped in the gallery, was't not white, Morbo?

Morbo.

As a lady's hand, by these five fingers.

Timpania.

White? No, no, 'twas a tawny, now I remember.

Morbo.

As a gipsy, by this hand. It look'd white by candle-light, though.

Timpania.

That lusty springal¹¹, Millicent, is no worse man Than the duke of Milan's son.

"Look how thou stirrest now:

"Come away, I'll fetch thee with a wannion."

Ben Jonson's Devil is an Ass.

"And a cuckold is,

"Where'er he put his head with a wannion,

"If his horns be forth, the devil's companion!"

¹¹ *That lusty springal.] Springal (adolescens) a youth. Skinner.*

Spenser's Fairy Queen, B. 5. C. 10. S. 6.

"Amongst the rest which in that space befel,

"There came two springals of full tender years."

Wily beguiled. 1606.

"Pray, ye maid, bid him welcome, and make much of him, for by my vay, he's a good proper springald."

Y 3

Abstemia.

Abstemia.

His excellent carriage spoke him of noble birth.

Timpania.

And this same duke's son loves you, Millicent.

Abstemia.

Now Heaven defend me !

Timpania.

What, from a duke's son ? marry come up with a mur-
tain, from whence came you too, ha ?

Morbo.

Thus nice Grace was at first, and you remember.

Timpania.

I would have ye know, housewife, I could have taken
my coach, and fetch'd him one of the best pieces in Milan,
and her husband should have look'd after me, that's neigh-
bours might have noted, and cry'd farewell naunt, com-
mend me to mine unole.

Morbo.

And yet from these perfum'd fortunes, Heaven defend
you !

Abstemia.

Perfum'd indeed.

Morbo.

Perfum'd ! I am a pander, a rogue, that hangs together
like a beggar's rags by geometry, if there were not three
ladies swore yesterday that my mistress perfum'd the coach !
so they were fain to unbrace all the side-parts, to take in
fresh air.

Timpania.

He tells you true ; I keep no common company, I war-
rant ye. We vent no breath'd ware here.

Abstemia.

But have ye so many several women, to answer so many
men that come ?

Morbo.

I'll answer that by demonstration. Have ye not observ'd
the variation of a cloud ? sometimes it will be like a lion,
sometimes like a horse, sometimes a castle, and yet still a
cloud.

Abstemia.

THE CITY NIGHT-CAP. 327

True.

Abstemia.

Morbo.

Why, so can we make one wench one day look like a country-wench; another day like a citizen's wife; another day like a lady;—and yet still be a punk.

Abstemia.

What shall become of me? Oh the curse
Of goodness, to leave one woe for a worse!

Enter Philippo.

Philippo.

Morrow, sweet madam. Oh look how like the sun behind a cloud, the beams do give intelligence it is there!

Timpania.

You're reciprocal welcome, fir.

Philippo.

What, have ye not brought this young wild haggard¹² to the lure yet?

Timpania.

Faith, fir, she's a little irregular yet: but time, that turns citizens caps into court-periwigs, will bring the wonder about.

Philippo.

Bless you, sweet mistress!

Enter Antonio and Slave.

Morbo.

'Sfoot, here's the prince; I smell thunder.

Timpania.

Your grace is most methodically welcome. You must pardon my variety of phrase; the courtiers e'en cloy us with good words.

¹² Young wild haggard.] A haggard gawwle is one that is wild and hard to reclaim. See Latham's Book of Faulconry, 4to. 1633. p. 80.

Maffinger's Maid of Honour. A. 2. S. 2.

"A proud haggard,

"And not to be reclaim'd!"

What's he ?

Antonio.

A gentleman of Ferrara, sir ; one Pedro Sebastianio.

Antonio.

And do ye set her out to sale ? I charg'd ye reserve for me alone.

Timpania.

Indeed, sir,

Antonio.

Pox of your deeds. —

[Kicks her.

Timpania.

Oh my sciatica !

Antonio.

Sirrah, you perfum'd rascal !

[Kicks Philippo. They draw.

Timpania.

Nay, good my lord.

Morbo.

Good sir, 'tis one of the duke's chamber.

Philippe.

Let him be of the devil's chamber.

Antonio.

Sirrah, leave the house, or I will send thee out with thunder.

Slaves.

Good sir, 'tis madness here to stand him.

Philippe.

'Sfoot, kickt ? Pray that we meet no more again, sir ; Still keep heaven about you.

Abstemia.

Whate'er thou art, a good man still go with thee.

Antonio.

Will you bestow a cast of your professions ?

Morbo.

We are vanish'd, sir.

Timpania.

This 'tis to dream of rotten glasses, Morbo.

Abstemia.

O what shall become of me ? In his eye

Murder

Murder and lust contend.

Antonio.

Nay, fly not, you sweet,
I am not angry with you; indeed, I am not.
Do you know me?

Abstemia.

Yes, sir, report hath given intelligence
You are the prince, the duke's son.

Antonio.

Both in one.

Abstemia.

Report sure
Spoke but her native language: You are none of either.

Antonio.

How?

Abstemia.

Were you the prince, you would not sure be slav'd
To your blood's passion. I do crave your pardon
For my rough language. Truth hath a forehead free,
And in the tow'r of her integrity,
Sits an unvanquish'd virgin. Can you imagine
'Twill appear possible you are the prince?
Why when you set your foot first in this house,
You crush'd obedient duty unto death,
And even then fell from you your respect.
Honour is like a goodly old house, which
If we repair not still with virtue's hand,
Like a citadel being madly rais'd on sand,
It falls, is swallow'd, and not found.

Antonio.

If you rail upon the place, pr'ythee
How cam'st thou hither?

Abstemia.

By treacherous intelligence. Honest men so
In the way ignorant, through thieves purlicus go.
Are you son to such a noble father?
Send him to's grave then
Like a white almond-tree, full of glad days,
With joy that he begot so good a son.
Oh, sir, methinks I see sweet majesty

Sit

THE CITY NIGHT-CAP.

Sit with a mourning sad face full of sorrows,
To see you in this place. This is a cave
Of scorpions and of dragons. Oh turn back :
Toads here ingender ; 'tis the steam of death :
The very air poisons a good man's breath.

Enter Timpania and Morbo.

Antonio.

Within there !

Morbo.

Sir.

Antonio.

Is my caroach at door ?

Timpania.

And your horses too, sir. Ye found her pliant.

Antonio.

Y'are rotten hospitals hung with greasy fatten !

Timpania.

Ah !

Morbo.

Came this nice piece from Naples, with a pox to her ?

Timpania.

And she has not Neapolitaniz'd him, I'll be flead for't.

[Exeunt Barwd and Pander.]

Antonio.

Let me borrow goodness from thy lip. Farewel.
Here's a new wonder ; I have met heaven in hell.

[Exeunt.]

Enter Venice, Verona, Lodovico, Pandulpho, Jaspro.

Verona.

Is this your chaste, religious lady ?

Lodovico.

Nay, good my lord, let it be carried with a silent reputation, for the credit of the conclusion. As all here are privy to the passage, I do desire not to be laugh'd at, till after the mask, and we are all ready. I have made bold with some of your grace's gentlemen that are good dancers.

Verona,

Verona.

'Tis one of my greatest wonders, credit me,
To think what way she will devise here openly
To perform her so strict penance.

Venice.

It busies me, believe me, too.

Jaspro.

Ye may see now, sir, how possible it is for a cunning
lady to make an ass of a lord too confident.

Lodovico.

An ass! I will prove a contented cuckold the wisest
man in's company.

Verona.

How prove you that, sir?

Lodovico.

Because he knows himself.

Verona.

Very well brought in.

Is all our furniture fit, against the morning,
To go for Milan?

Jaspro.

Ready, and like your grace.

Verona.

We are given to understand, the injur'd princess,
Whom Count Lorenzo and noble Philipppo
Are (unknown to one another) gone in search of,
Hath been seen there disguis'd. Strict inquisition
From the duke himself shall, ere many days,
Give our hopes satisfaction.

Enter Dorotha, Ladies, Francisco, and Clown.

Jaspro.

The ladies, sir. Francisco keeps before, sir,
And Pambo keeps all well behind.

Lodovico.

Yes, there's devout lechery between hawk and buzzard.
But please ye set the ladies. The mask attends your
grace.

[Exit.

Verona.

92 THE CITY NIGHT-CAP.

Verona.

Come, ladies, sit. Madona Dorothea,
Your ingenious lord hath suddenly prepar'd us
For a conceited mask, and himself it seems
Plays the presenter.

Dorothea.

Now, fie upon this vanity :
A profane mask ! Chastity keep us, ladies.

Venice.

What, from a mask ? Whereon grounds your wish ?

Dorothea.

Marry, my lord, upon experience.
I heard of one, once brought his wife to a mask,
As chaste as a cold night ; but, poor unfortunate fellow,
He lost her in the throng ; and she, poor soul,
Came home so crush'd next morning !

Venice.

'Las, that was ill :
But women will be lost against their will.

Verona.

Silence, the masquers enter.

*Enter Lodovico, Clown, and Masquers : a stag, a ram,
a bull, and a goat.*

Clown.

Look to me, master.

Lodovico.

Do not shake, they'll think th'art out.—A mask.

Clown.

A mask, or no mask ; no mask but a by-clap ;
And yet a mask yclep'd a city night-cap.

Lodovico.

And conve——

Clown.

And conveniently for to keep off scorns,
Considerately the cap is hedg'd with horns.

Lodovico.

We insinuate.

Clown.

Speak a little louder.

Lodovico.

Lodovico.

We insinuate.

Clown.

We insinuate by this stag and ram so pretty,
With goat and bull, court, country, camp and city.

Lodovico.

Cuckold.

Clown.

Cuckold, my lord.

Lodovico.

'Tis the first word of your next line.

Clown.

Oh——cuckold begins with C. And is't not sport?
Then C begins with country, camp and court:
But here's the fine figury of our poet,
That one may wear this night-cap, and not know it.

Dorothea.

Why, chicken, shall they make such an ass of thee?
good your grace, can a woman indure to see her loving
husband wear horns in's own house?

Verona.

Pray, lady, 'tis but in jest.

Dorothea.

In jest? nay for the jest sake, keep then on, sweet bird.

Clown.

Now to our mask's name: but first, be it known-a,
When I name a city, I only mean Verona.
Those two lines are extempore, I protest fir; I brought
them in, because here are some of other cities in the room
that might snuff pepper else¹³.

Venice.

You have fairly ta'en that fear off; pray proceed.

Lodovico.

Your kindest men.

¹³ *Snuff pepper else.*] i. e. might take offence or be affronted. *To take pepper in the nose*, was formerly a cant phrase for being affronted or irritated; as in *Tarlton's Newes out of Purgatory*, 1630. p. 10. "Myles
"hearing him name the Baker, tooke straight pepper in the nose, and
"starting up threw off his cardinals robes."

Clown.

Clown.

Your kindest men most cuckolds are, oh pity !
 And where have women most their will, oh city !
 Sick for a night-cap, go to cuckolds luck ;
 Who thrives like him, who hath the daintiest duck
 To deck his stall ? nay at the time of rapping,
 When you may take the watch at corners napping ;
 Take it forsooth, it is a wondrous hap,
 If you find master constable without his cap :
 So a city night-cap ; for whilst he doth roam
 And fights abroad, his wife commits at home.

Venice.

A Verona constable.

Clown.

A constable of Verona ; we will not
 Meddle with your city of Venice, fir.
 Therefore 'tis fit the city, wise men say,
 Should have a cap call'd Cornucopia.

Lodovico.

To con ———

Clown.

To conclude our cap, and stretch it on the tenter,
 'Tis known a city is the whole land's center :
 So that a city night-cap, ours we call,
 By a conclusion philosophical.
 Heavy bodies tend to th' center so (the more the pity)
 The heaviest heads do butt upon the city :
 And to our dance this title doth redound,
 A city night-cap, alias cuckolds round.

Dorothea.

Cuckolds round ! and my sweet bird leads the dance !

Verona.

Be patient, madam, 'tis but honest mirth :
 From good construction pleasure finds full birth. [Dance.

Verona.

Jaspro, fill some wine.

Jaspro.

'Tis here, fir.

Verona.

Count Lodovico !

Lodovico.

Sir.

Lodovico.

Verona.

I'll instantly give you a fair occasion to produce
The performance of her penance.

Lodovico.

I'll catch occasion by the lock, fir.

Verona.

Here, a health to all; it shall go round.

Lodovico.

'Tis a general health, and leads the rest into the field.

Clown.

Your honour breaks jests as serving-men do glasses, by
chance.

Verona.

As I was drinking, I was thinking, trust me,
How fortunate our kind host was to meet
With so chaste a wife; troth tell me, good count Lodo-
wick,
Admit Heaven had her.

Lodovico.

Oh, good your grace, do not wound me.
Admit Heaven had her! 'las what should Heaven do with
her?

Verona.

Your love makes you thus passionate; but admit so:
Faith, what wife would you chuse?

Lodovico.

Were I to chuse then, as I would I were, so this were
at Japan,
I would wish, my lord, a wife so like my lady,
That once a week she should go to confession;
And to perform the penance she should run,
Nay, should do nought but dream on't till 'twere done.

Jaspro.

A delicate memento, to put her in mind of her penance.

Dorothea.

Now you talk of dreams, sweet heart, I'll tell ye a
very unhappy one; I was a dream'd last night of Francis
there.

538 THE CITY NIGHT-CAR.

Enter Jaspro.

Jaspro.

Your servant tells me,
Count Lodowick, that one father Antony,
A holy man, stays without to speak with you.

Lodowick.

With me, or my lady?

Jaspro.

Nay, with you, and about earnest business.

Lodowick.

I'll go send him up, and he shall interpret my lady's
dream. Hift, Jaspro. *[Exeunt.]*

Dorothea.

Why, husband! my lord!

Francisco.

Didst mark? He must interpret ¹⁵.

Clown.

I smell wormwood and vinegar.

Venice.

She changes colour:

Dorothea.

He will not sure reveal confession!

Verona.

We'll rise and to our lodgings: I think your highness
Keeps better hours in Venice?

Venice.

As all do, sir:

We many times make modest mirth a necessity
To produce ladies dreams.

Francisco.

How they shoot at us! Would I were in Milan!
These passages fry me:

Enter Jaspro and Lodowick.

Jaspro.

Here's strange juggling come to light.

¹⁵ *He must interpret.*] Former editions read, *I must interpret*: Francisco seems to allude to Lodowick's last words. S. P.

Verona;

Ha, juggling!

Verona.

Jaspro.

This fryer hath confess'd unto count Lodowick,
That his lady here, being absolv'd,
Confessed this morning to him here, in her own house,
Her man Francisco here, had lain with her.
At which her lord runs up and down the garden
Like one distracted, crying, Ware horns, ho.

Dorothea.

Art mad? Deny it yet; I am undone else.

Clown.

Father Tony!

Lodowick.

I confess it, I deny it, ay any thing, I do every thing,
I do nothing.

Verona.

The fryer's fallen frantick; and being mad,
Depraves a lady of so chaste a breast,
A bad thought never bred there.

Dorothea.

'Tis my misfortune still to suffer, sir.

Lodowick.

Did you not see one slip out of a cloak-bag i'th' fashion
of a sitch of bacon, and run under the table amongst the
hogs?

Venice.

He's mad, he's mad.

Clown.

Ay, ay, a tythe-pig; 'twas overlaid last night, and he
speaks nonsense all the day after—

Dorothea.

Shall I, sir, suffer this, in mine own house too?

Clown.

I'd scratch out's eyes first.

Verona.

Since, lady, you and your man Francisco
Are the two injur'd persons, here disrobe
This irregular son of his religious mother,

Expose him to apparent blush of shame,
And tear those holy weeds off.

Francisco.

Now you, my frantick brother,
Had you not been better spar'd your breath?

Dorothea.

And ye keep counsel, fir, no better,
We'll ease you of your orders.

Clown.

Nay, let me have a hand in't: I'll tear the coat with
more zeal than a puritan would tear a surplice.

Francisco.

See what 'tis to accuse when you're mad.

Dorothea.

I confess again to you now, fir, this man did lie with me.

Clown.

And I brought him to her chamber too: but come, turn
out here.

Duke.

Who's this?

Omnes.

'Tis count Lodowick.

Lodovico.

How dreams, sweet wife, do fall out true!

Clown.

I was a dream'd, now I remember, I was whipp'd thro'
Verona.

Lodovico.

I was your confessor:
Did not I enjoin your chaste nice ladyship
A dainty penance?

Jaspro.

And she perform'd it as daintily, fir, we'll be sworn for that.

Dorothea.

Oh, good fir, I crave your pardon!

Lodovico.

And what say you, Francis?

Francisco.

You have run best, fir: vain 'tis to defend;
Craft sets forth swift, but still fails in the end.

Lodovico.

Lodowico.

You brought him to her chamber, Pambo,

Clown.

Good, my lord, I was merely inveigled to't.

Lodowico.

I have nothing to do with ye, I take no notice of ye;
I have play'd my past off to th' life, and your grace promis'd to perform yours.

Verona.

And publicly we will still raise their fame:
Who e'er knew private sin 'scape public shame?
You, sir, that do appear a gentleman,
Yet are within slave to dishonest passions,
You shall thro' Verona ride upon an ass
With your face towards his back-part, and in
Your hand his tail 'stead of a bridle.

Clown.

'Snails, upon an ass! an 't'ad been upon an horse, it
had been worthy, gramercy.

Verona.

Peace, firrah:

After that, you shall be branded in the forehead,
And after banish'd. Away with him!

Francisco.

Lust is still

Like a midnight-meal: after our violent drinkings,
'Tis swallow'd greedily; but the course being kept,
We are sicker when we wake, than ere we slept. [Exit.

Clown.

He must be branded! if the whoremaster be burnt,
what shall become of the procurer?

Verona.

You, madam, in that you have cozen'd sanctity,
To promise her the vows you never paid,
You shall unto the monastery of matrons,
And spend your days reclusive: for we conceive it
Her greatest plague, who her days in lust hath past
And soil'd, against her will to be kept chaste.

Dorothea.

Your doom is just, no sentence can be given

342 THE CITY NIGHT-CAP;

Too hard for her plays fast and loose with Heaven.

Lodovico.

I will buse thee, and bid fair weather after thee. But for you, firrah——

Clown.

Nay, sir, 'tis but *Crede quod habes & habet*, at most; believe I have a halter, and I have one.

Verona.

You, firrah, we are possess'd, were their pander.

Clown.

I brought but flesh to flesh, sir, and your grace does as much when you bring your meat to your mouth.

Verona.

You, firrah, at a cart's tail shall be whip'd Thro' the city.

Clown.

There's my dream out already; but since there is no remedy but that whipping-cheer must close up my stomach, I would request a note from your grace to the carman, to intreat him to drive apace; I shall never endure it else.

Verona.

I hope, count Lodowick, we have satisfied ye.

Lodovico.

To th' full; and I think the cuckold catch'd the cuckold-makers.

Verona.

'Twas a neat penance; but oh! the art of woman in the performance!

Lodovico.

Pshaw, sir, 'tis nothing: had she been in her granam's place,

Had not the devil first began the sin,
And cheated her, she would have cheated him.

Verona.

Let all to rest; and, noble sir, i'th' morning,
With a small private train, we are for Milan.
Vice for a time may shine, and virtue sigh;
But truth, like heaven's sun, plainly doth reveal,
And scourge or crown, what darkness did conceal.

A C T

THE CITY NIGHT-CAP.

ACT. V. Scene. I.

Enter Antonio and a Slave, used in the other's livery.

BUT, faith, fir, what's your device in this ?
This change insinuates some project.

Antonio.

Shall I tell thee ?

Thou art my slave, I took thee (when a Turk).
In the fight thou know'st we made before Palermo;
Thou art not in stricter bondage unto me
Than I am unto Cupid.

Slave.

Oh then you are going, fir,
To your old rendezvous ; there are brave rogues there :
But the duke observes you narrowly, and sets spies
To watch if you step that way.

Antonio.

Why therefore, man,
Thus many times I have chang'd habits with thee,
To cheat suspicion ; and prejudicate nature
(Mistress of inclinations) sure intended
To knit thee up so like me, for this purpose ;
For th'ast been taken in my habit for me.

Slave.

Yes, and have had many a French cringe
As I have walk'd i'th' park ; and, for fear of discovery,
I have crown'd it only with a nod.

Enter a Lord.

Antonio.

Th'art a mad villain.
But, firrah, I am wondrously taken
With a sweet face I saw yonder ; thou know'st where.

Slave.

At Venus-college, the court bawdy-house.

Z 4

Antonio.

Antonio.

But this maid, howsoever she came there,
Is acquainted so with Heaven, that when I thought
To have quench'd my frantick blood, and to have pluck'd
The fruit a king would leap at; even then
She beat me with such brave thunder off, as if
Heaven had lent her the artillery of angels.

Slave.

She was coy then?

Antonio.

Coy, man! she was honest; left coynefs to court-ladies;
She spake the language of the saints, methought,
Holy spectators sate on silver clouds,
And clapp'd their white wings at her well-plac'd words.
She piece-meal pull'd the frame of my intentions;
And so join'd it again, that all the tempest
Of blood can never move it.

Slave.

Some rare phoenix! what's her name?

Antonio.

'Tis Millicenta, and wondrous aptly,
For she is mistress of a hundred thousand holy heavenly
thoughts.

Chastly I love her now, and she must know it:
Such wondrous wealth is virtue, it makes the woman
Wears it about her, worthy of a king;
Since kings can be but virtuous, farewell.
A crown is but the care of deceiv'd life;
He's king of men, is crown'd with such a wife.

[Exit Antonio, and the lord after him.]

Slave.

Are your thoughts levell'd at that white then?

This

¹⁶ Are your thoughts levell'd at that white then? To dwell on to
bit the white, were phrases taken from archery, and often used by our
ancient writers. The white was the mark, at which archers practis'd
when they learned to shoot.

Massinger's Emperor of the East, A. 4. S. 3.

" — the immortality of my fame is the white I shoot at."

Beaumont

"This shall to th' duke your dad, sir; he can never talk with me"¹⁷

But he twits me still with, I took thee at that fight
We made before Palermo; I did command
Men as he did there, Turks and valiant men:
And tho' to wind myself up for his ruin,
That I may fall and crush him, I appear
To renounce Mahomet, and seem a Christian;
'Tis but conveniently to stab this Christian,
Or any way confound him, and 'scape cleanly.
And one expects the deed: to hasten it,
This letter came even now, which likewise certifies
He waits me three leagues off, with a horse for flight
Of a Turkish captain, commander of a gally.
He keeps me as his slave, because indeed
I play'd the devil at sea with him; but having
Thus wrought myself into him, I intend
To give him but this day to take his leave
Of the whole world. He will come back by twilight;
I'll wait him with a pistol. Oh sweet revenge!
Laugh, our great prophet, he shall understand,
When we think death farthest off, he's nearest hand.

Enter Philippo.

Philippo.

You and I must meet no more, sir: There's your kick again. [Kicks him.]

Beaumont and Fletcher's Four moral Representations in one, p. 539. vol. 10. edit. 1778.

"And let your thoughts flee higher; aim them right,

"Sir, you may hit; you have the fairest white."

Euphues and his England, 1582.

"— vertue is the white we shoot at, not vanitie." P. 11.

"— he glanced from the mark Euphues shot at, and hit at last the white which Philautus set up." P. 18.

"An archer saie you is to be known by his aime, not by his arrowe:

"but your aime is so ill, that if you knewe howe farre wide from the

"white your shaft sticketh, you would hereafter rather breake your bowe then bend it." *Ibid.* p. 57.

¹⁷ *This shall, &c.*] In this speech are to be found the outlines of the character of Zanga, so admirably drawn by Dr. Young. The plot of the *Revenge* is however said to have been taken from Mrs. Behn's play of *Abdelazar*, which was borrowed from Marlow's *Lust's Dominion*; or, the *Lecherous Queen*.

Slave.

Slave.

Hold, hold ; what mean you, sir ?

Philippo.

I have brought your kick back, sir — [Shoots him.

Slave.

Hold, man, I am not —

[Falls.

Philippo.

Thou hast spoken true, thou art not — What art thou ?

But I am for Verona.

[Exit.

*Slave.*Mine own words catch me ; 'tis, I now understand,
When we think death farthest off, he's nearest hand.

[Dies.

*Enter Lorenzo.**Lorenzo.*

She lives not sure in Milan : report but wore
 Her usual habit, when she told in Verona,
 She met Abstemia here. Oh, Abstemia !
 How lovely thou look'st now ! now thou appear'st
 Chaster than is the morning's modesty,
 That rises with a blush, over whose bosom
 The western wind creeps softly : now I remember
 How, when she sat at table, her obedient eye
 Would dwell on mine, as if it were not well,
 Unless it look'd where I look'd : Oh how proud
 She was, when she could cross herself to please me !
 But where now is this fair soul ? like a silver cloud
 She hath wept herself, I fear, into th' dead sea,
 And will be found no more : this makes me mad,
 To rave and call on death ; but the slave shrinks, " "
 And is as far to find as she. Abstemia,
 If thou not answer or appear to knowledge,

" To rave and call on death, &c.] So in *Cymbeline*, A. 5. S. 3.

" — I, in mine own woe charm'd,

" Could not find death, where I did hear him groan ;

" Nor feel him, where he struck : being an ugly monster,

" 'Tis strange, he hides him in fresh cups, soft beds,

" Sweet words ; or hath more ministers than we

" That draw his knives i'th' war."

That

THE CITY NIGHT-CAP. 347

That here with shame I fought thee in this wood,
I'll leave the blushing witness of my blood. [Exit.

Enter the duke of Milan, Sebastiano, Sanchio, and the Lord.

Milan.

Followed you him thus far?

Lord.

Just to this place, sir:
The slave he loves left him; here they parted.

Milan.

Certain he has some private haunt this way.

Sebastiano.

Ha! — private indeed, sir: Oh behold and see
Where he lies full of wounds!

Lord.

My lord.

Milan.

My son Antonio! who hath done this deed?

Sanchio.

My lord Antonio!

Milan.

He's gone, he's gone! warm yet, bleeds fresh; and
whilst

We here hold passion play, we but advantage
The flying murderer. Bear his body gently
Unto the lodge. Oh, what hand hath so hid
That sunlike face behind a crimson cloud!
Use all means possible for life: but I fear
Charity will arrive too late. To horse,
Disperse thro' the wood, run, ride, make way,
The sun in Milan is eclips'd this day.

Omnes.

To horse, and raise more pursuit.

[Exeunt.

Enter Lorenzo with his sword drawn.

Lorenzo.

Abstemia! Oh take her name, you winds, upon your
wings,
And thro' the wanton region of the air

Softly

348 THE CITY NIGHT-CAP

Softly convey it to her : there's no sweet sufferance,
Which bravely she pass'd through, but is a thorn
Now to my sides : my will the center stood
To all her chaste endeavours : all her actions,
With a perfection perpendicular,
Pointed upon it. She is lost ! oh, she,
The well-built fort of virtue's victory !
For still she conquer'd : since she is lost, then,
My friendly sword, find thou my heart.

Within.

Follow, follow.

Enter duke of Milan, Sanchio, and Sebastiano.

Milan.

This way, what's he ? lay hands on him.

Sebastiano.

The murd'rer, on my life, my lord, here in the wood
Was close beset, he would have slain himself.

Milan.

Speak, villain, art thou the bloody murderer ?

Lorenzo.

Of whom ?

Sanchio.

His dissembled ignorance speaks him the man.

Sebastiano.

Of the duke's son, the prince Antonio, sir ;
'Twas your hand that killd him.

Lorenzo.

Your lordship lyes, it was my sword.

Milan.

Out, slave !

Ravens shall feed upon thee : speak, what cause
Hadst thou with one unhappy wound to cloud
That star of Milan ?

Lorenzo.

Because he was an erring star,
Not fix'd nor regular ; I will resolve nothing ;
I did it, do not repent it ; and were it
To do again, I'd do't.

Omnes.

Omnes.

Blood-thirsty villain !

Milan.

Leave him to swift destruction, tortures, and death.
Oh my Antonio ! how did thy youth stray,
To meet wild winter in the midst of May ?

Lorenzo.

Oh, my Abstemia ! who cast thy fate so bad,
To clip affliction, like a husband clad ¹⁹ ? [Exeunt.

Enter Antonio and Abstemia.

Abstemia.

Good fir, the prince makes known his wisdom,
To make you speaker in his cause.

Antonio.

Me ? know, mistress,
I have felt love's passions equal with himself,
And can discourse of love's cause : had you seen him
When he sent me to yè, how truly he did look ;
And when your name slip'd thro' his trembling lips,
A lover's lovely paleness straight possess'd him.

Abstemia.

Fie, fie.

Antonio.

Go, says he, to that something more than woman,
(And he look'd as if by something he meant saint)
Tell her I saw heaven's army in her eyes,
And that from her chaste heart such excellent goodness
Came like full rivers flowing, that there wants nothing
But her soft yielding will, to make her wife
Unto the prince Antonio. Oh, will you fly
A fortune which great ladies would pursue
Upon their knees with prayers ?

Abstemia.

No, Lorenzo,
Had law to this new love made no denial :
A chaste wife's truth shines thro' the greatest trial.

¹⁹ To clip] To embrace.

Enter

Enter Morbo.

Morbo.

How now, what makes you i'th' wood here? Where's my old lady?

Abstemia.

I know not.

Morbo.

All the country's in an uproar yonder: the prince Antonio's slain.

Ambo.

How!

Morbo.

Nay, no man can tell how; but the murd'rer with's sword in's hand is taken.

Antonio.

Is he of Milan?

Morbo.

No, of Verona: I heard his name, and I have forgot it.

Antonio.

I am all wonder; 'tis the slave sure!

Morbo.

Lor—Lor—Lorenzo.

Abstemia.

Ha, Lorenzo! What, I pray?

Morbo.

Lorenzo Me—Medico has run him in the eye, some thirty-three inches, two barley-corns: they could scarce know him for the blood, but by his apparel. I must find out my lady; he us'd our house, intelligence has been given of his pilgrimage thither: I am afraid I shall be sing'd to death with torches, and my lady stew'd between two dishes.

Antonio.

Why hath this thus amaz'd you, mistress?

Abstemia.

Oh leave me, leave me, I am all distraction,
Struck to the soul with sorrow.

Enter

THE CITY NIGHT-CAP. 351

Enter Milan, Lords, and Lorenzo guarded.

Antonio.

See where they come !
My father full of tears too ! I'll stand by :
Strange changes must have strange discovery.

Abstemia.

'Tis he : heart, how thou leap'st ! Oh ye deluded,
And full of false rash judgment ! why do ye lead
Innocence like a sacrifice to slaughter ?
Get garlands rather, let palm and laurel round
Those temples, where such wedlock-truth is found.

Lorenzo.

Ha ?

Omnes.

Wedlock !

Abstemia.

Oh Lorenzo ! thou hast suffer'd bravely,
And wond'rous far : look on me, here I come
Hurried by conscience to confess the deed :
Thy innocent blood will be too great a burthen
Upon the judge's soul.

Lorenzo.

Abstemia !

Abstemia.

Look, look,
How he will blind ye ! by and by he'll tell ye
We saw not one another many a day ;
In love's cause we dare make our lives away.
He would redeem mine : 'tis my husband, sir ;
Dearly we love together : but I being often
By the dead prince your son solicited
To wrong my husband's bed, and still resisting,
Where you found him dead, he met me, and the place
Presenting opportunity, he would there
Have forc'd me to his will ; but prizing honesty
Far above proffer'd honour, with my knife,
In my resistance, most unfortunately
I struck him in the eye : he fell, was found,
The pursuit rais'd, and ere I could get home
My husband met me, I confess'd all to him :

He excellent in love as the sea-inhabitant,
 Of whom 'tis writ, that when the flatt'ring hook
 Has struck his female, he will help her off,
 Altho' he desperately put on himself;
 But if he fail, and see her leave his eye,
 He swims to land, will languish, and there die:
 Such is his love to me; for pursu'd closely,
 He bid me save myself, and he would stay
 With his drawn sword, there about the place, on purpose
 To requite my loyalty, tho' with his death.
 Fear forc'd my acceptance then, but conscience
 Hath brought me back to preserve innocence.

Sebastiano.

The circumstances produce probability.

Lorenzo.

By truth herself, she slanders truth: she and I
 Have not met these many months. Oh my Abstemia!
 Thou wouldst be now too excellent.

Antonio.

These are strange turns.

Milan.

Let not love strangle justice; speak, on thy soul,
 Was it her hand that slew the prince?

Lorenzo.

Not, on my life;
 'Tis I have deserv'd death.

Abstemia.

Love makes him desperate,
 Conscience is my accuser. Oh Lorenzo!

[The duke and lords whisper.]

Live thou, and feed on my remembrance:
 When thou shalt think how ardently I love thee,
 Drop but a pair of tears, from those fair eyes,
 Thou offer'st truth a wealthy sacrifice.

Lorenzo.

Did ye hear, sir?

Milan.

No, what said she?

Lorenzo.

She ask'd me why I would cast myself away thus,
 When she in love devis'd this trick to save me.

Sanchio.

Sanchio.

There may be juggling, sir, in this ; it may be
They have both hands i'th' deed, and one in love
Would suffer for't.

Enter a Lord.

Milan.

What news ?

Lord.

The dukes of Venice and Verona,
With some small train of gentlemen, are privately
This hour come to th' court.

Milan.

Bear them to prison,
Until we have given such entertainment, sorrow
Will give us leave to shew : until that time
The satisfaction of my lost son's life
Must hover 'twixt a husband and a wife :

[Exeunt. Manet Antonio.]

Antonio.

How strangely chance to-day runs ! the slave kill'd
In my apparel, and this fellow taken for't,
Whom to my knowledge I never saw. She loves him
Past all expression dearly. I have a trick,
In that so infinitely dear she loves him,
Has seal'd her mine already ; and I'll put
This wond'rous love of woman to such a nonplus,
Time hath produc'd none stranger. I will set
Honour and Love to fight for life and death.
Beauty (as castles built of cards) with a breath
Is levell'd and laid flat.

Enter Philippo, putting on a disguise, lays down a pistol.

Philippo.

Misery of ignorance !
It was the prince Antonio I have slain.

Antonio.

Ha ! the clew of all this error is unravell'd.
This is the valiant gentleman so threaten'd me :
He met the slave doubtless in my habit,

VOL. XI.

A a

And

And seal'd upon him his mistaken spleen.
If it be so, there hangs some strange intent
In those accuse themselves for't.

Philippe.

It seems some other had laid the plot to kill him.
This paper, I found with him, speaks as much,
And sent to the intended murderer,
Happen'd it seems, to his hands. It concurs ;
For they say, there is one taken for the fact,
And will do me the courtesy to be hang'd for me.

[Antonio takes up the pistol.]

There's comfort yet in that. So, so, I am fitted,
And will set forward.

Antonio.

Goose, there's a fox in your way.

Philippe.

Betray'd !

Antonio.

Come, I have other business afoot : I have no time to
discover 'em now, fir. See, I can enforce you ; but by
this hand, go but with me, and keep your own counsel.
Garden-houses are not truer bawds to cuckold-making,
than I will be to thee and thy stratagem.

Philippe.

Th'art a mad knave ; art serious ?

Antonio.

As a usurer when he's telling interest-money.

Philippe.

Whate'er thou art, thy bluntness begets belief. Go on,
I trust thee.

Antonio.

But I have more wit than to trust you behind me, fir ;
pray, get you before. I have a friend shall keep you in
custody till I have pass'd a project ; and if you can keep
your own counsel, I will not injure you. And this for
your comfort, the prince lives.

Philippe.

Living ! Thou mak'st my blood dance. But pr'ythee,
let's be honest one to another.

Antonio.

Antonio.

Oh, fir, as the justice's clerk and the constable, when they share the crowns that drunkards pay to the poor. Pray keep fair distance, and take no great strides.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Lorenzo and Abstemia, as in prison.

Lorenzo.

Can then Abstemia forgive Lorenzo?

Abstemia.

Yes, if Lorenzo can but love Abstemia, She can thus hang upon his neck, and call This prison True Love's Palace.

Lorenzo.

Oh let kings Forget their crowns, that know what 'tis to enjoy The wond'rous wealth of one so good. Now Thou art lovely as a young spring, and comely As is the well-spread cedar; the fair fruit, Kifs'd by the sun so daily, that it wears The lovely blush of maids, seems but to mock Thy soul's integrity. Here let me fall; And with pleading sighs beg pardon.

Enter Antonio.

Abstemia.

Sir, it meets you, Like a glad pilgrim, whose desiring eye Longs for the long-wish'd altar of his vow. But you are far too prodigal in praise, And crown me with the garlands of your merit. As we meet barks on rivers, the strong gale, (Being best friends to us) our own swift motion Makes us believe that t'other nimbler rows; Swift virtue thinks small goodness fastest goes.

Lorenzo.

Sorrow hath bravely sweeten'd thee! What are you?

Antonio.

A displeasing black cloud. Tho' I appear dismal,

A 2

I am

I am wond'rous fruitful. What cause soever
 M^yd you to take this murder on yourself,
 Or you to strike yourself into the hazard
 For his redemption, 'tis to me a stranger.
 But I conceive you are both innocent.

Lorenzo.

As new-born virtue. I did accuse
 My innocence, to rid me of a life
 Look'd uglier than death, upon an injury
 I had done this virtuous wife.

Abstemia.

And I accus'd
 My innocence, to save the belov'd life
 Of my most noble husband.

Antonio.

Why then now 'twould grieve you,
 Death should unkindly part ye.

Lorenzo.

Oh but that, fir,
 We have no sorrow. Now to part from her,
 (Since Heaven hath new-married and new-made us)
 I had rather leap into a den of lions;
 Snatch from a hungry bear her bleeding prey:
 I would attemptl desperate impossibilities
 With hope, rather than now to leave her.

Antonio.

This makes for me.

Abstemia.

And rather than leave you, fir, I would eat
 Hot coals with Portia, or attempt a terror
 Nature would, snail-like, shrink her head in at,
 And tremble but to think on.

Antonio.

Better and better!
 If you so love him, what can you conceive
 The greatest kindness can express that love?

Abstemia.

To save his life, since there is no hope,
 Seeing he so strongly has confess'd the murder,
 We shall meet the happiness to die together.

Antonio.

Antonio.

Fire casts the bravest heat in coldest weather :
 I'll try how ardently you burn ; for know,
 Upon my faith, and as I am a gentleman,
 I have (in the next room, and in the custody
 Of a true friend) the man that did the deed
 You stand accus'd for.

Abstemia.

Hark there, Lorenzo.

Lorenzo.

Will you not let him go, sir ?

Antonio.

That's in suspense. But, mistress, you did say,
 You durst eat coals with Portia, to redeem
 The infinitely lov'd life of your husband.

Abstemia.

And still strongly protest it.

Lorenzo.

Oh my Abstemia !

Antonio.

You shall redeem him at an easier rate :
 I have the murderer, you see, in hold.

Lorenzo.

And we are blest'd in your discovery of him.

Antonio.

If you will give consent that I shall taste
 That sense-bereaving pleasure so familiar
 Unto your happy husband——

Abstemia.

How ?

Antonio.

Pray hear me :
 Then I will give this fellow up to the law.
 If you deny, horses stand ready for us,
 A bark for transportation ; where we will live,
 Till law by death hath sever'd ye.

Lorenzo.

But we will call for present witness.

A a 3

Antonio.

Antonio.

Look ye——

[Shows the pistol.]

Experienc'd navigators still are fitted
 For every weather. 'Tis almost past call
 To reach the nimblest ear : yet but offer it,
 I part ye presently for ever. Consider it :
 The enjoying him thou so entirely lov'st
 All thy life after ; that when mirth-spent time
 Hath crown'd your heads with honour, you may sit
 And tell delightful stories of your loves ;
 And when ye come to that poor minute's 'scape
 Crowns my desire, ye may let that slip by,
 Like water that ne'er meets the miller's eye.
 Compare but this to th' soon-forgotten pleasure
 Of a pair of wealthy minutes. The ¹⁹ thriftest lapidary
 Knows the most curious jewel takes no harm
 For one day's wearing. Could you, sir, (did your eye
 Not see it worn) your wife having lent your cloak,
 (If secretly return'd and folded up)
 Could you conceive, when you next look'd upon't,
 It had neatly furnish'd out a poor friend's want ?
 Be charitable, and think on't.

Lorenzo.

Do'st hear, Abstemia ?

Oh shall we part for ever, when a price
 So poor might be our freedom ?

Abstemia.

Now, Goodness guard ye !

Where learnt you, sir, this language ?

Lorenzo.

Of true love.

You did but now profess, that you would die
 To save my life ; and now, like a forward chapman,
 Catch'd at thy word, thou giv'st back, asham'd
 To stand this easy proffer.

Abstemia.

Could you live,
 And know yourself a cuckold ?

¹⁹ *[Thriftest.]* First edition reads *thirfliest*.

6

Antonio.

Antonio.

What a question's that !
Many men cannot live without the knowledge.
How can ye tell
Whether she seems thus to respect your honour,
But to stay till the law has choak'd you ?
It may be then she will do't with less intreaty.

Lorenzo.

Ay, there, there 'tis.

Abstemia.

'Tis your old fit of jealousy so judges.
A foul devil talks within him.

Lorenzo.

Oh the art,
The wond'rous art of woman ! ye would do it daintily ;
You would juggle me to death ; you would persuade me
I should die nobly to preserve your honour ;
That dead, ignobly you might prove dishonourable, !
Forget me in a day, and wed another.

Abstemia.

Why then would I have died for you ?

Antonio.

That was but a proffer,
That dying you might idolize her love :
'Twould have put her off the better.

Lorenzo.

Oh you have builded
A golden palace, strew'd with palm and roses,
To let me bleed to death in ! How sweetly
You would have lost me ! Abstemia, you have learn'd
The cunning fowler's art, who pleasantly
Whistles the bird into the snare. Good Heaven !
How you had strew'd the enticing top o' th' cup
With Arabian spices ! But you had laid i' th' bottom
Ephesian aconite. You are love's hypocrite ;
A rotten stick, in the night's darkness born,
And a fair poppy in a field of corn.

Abstemia.

Oh fir ! hear me——

A 2 4

[Kneels.
Lorenzo.

Lorenzo.

Away ; I will no more
 Look pearl in mud. Oh fly hypocrisy ! Durst ye
 But now die for me ? Good Heaven ! die for me !
 The greatest act of pain, and dare not buy me
 With a poor minute's pleasure ?

Abstemia.

No, sir, I dare not : there is little pain in death ;
 But a great death in every little pleasure.
 I had rather, trust me, bear your death with honour,
 Than buy your life with baseness. As I am expos'd
 To th' greatest battery Beauty ever fought,
 Oh blame me not if I be covetous
 To come off with greatest honour. If I do this
 To let you live, I kill your name, and give
 My soul a wound ; I crush her from sweet grace,
 And change her angel's to a fury's face.
 Try me no more then ; but, if you must bleed, boast,
 To preserve honour, life is nobly lost.

Lorenzo.

Thou wealth worth more than kingdoms, I am now
 Confirm'd past all suspicion, thou art far
 Sweeter in thy sincere truth, than a sacrifice
 Deck'd up for death with garlands. The Indian winds ²⁰,
 That blow off from the coast, and cheer the sailor
 With the sweet savour of their spices, want
 The delight flows in thee. Look here, look here,
 Oh man of wild desires ! We will die the martyrs
 Of marriage ; and, 'stead of the loose ditties
 With which they stab sweet modesty, and ingender

²⁰ —the Indian winds, &c.] So Milton, in *Paradise Lost*, B. 4.
 L. 159.

“ ——— As when to them who sail
 “ Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
 “ Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
 “ Sabean odors from the spicy shore
 “ Of Araby the blest : with such delay
 “ Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a league
 “ Chear'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles,

Desires

Defires in the hot-room, thy noble story
Shall, laurel-like, crown honest ears with glory.

Antonio.

Murder, murder, murder!

Enter the three Dukes, with Lords.

Milan.

Ha! who cries murder?

Philippo.

As y'are a gentleman, now be true to me.

Abstemia.

Sir!

Venice.

Sister!

Verona.

My shame! art thou there?

Venice.

Oh sister, can it be
A prince's blood should stain that white hand?

Ambo.

Hear us.

Antonio.

No, no, no, hear me: 'twas I cry'd murder;
Because I have found them both stain'd with the deed
They would have throttled me.

Lorenzo.

Hear us, by all——

Milan.

Upon your lives be silent. Speak on, fir:
Had they both hands in our son's blood?

Antonio.

Two hands apiece, fir.
I have sifted it: they both have kill'd the prince;
But this is the chief murderer. Please you give me
audience;
Ye shall wonder at the manner how they kill'd him.

Milan.

Silence!

352 THE CITY NIGHT-CAP.

Antonio.

He came first to this woman, and (truth's truth)
He would have lain with her.

Milan.

Her own confession.

Antonio.

Nay, good your grace.

Milan.

We are silent.

Antonio.

Coming to seize upon her, with the first blow
She struck his base intent so brave a buffet,
That there it bled to death. She said, his horse
Would teach him better manners. There he died once.

Verona.

What does this fellow talk ?

Abstemia.

I understand him.

Antonio.

He met her next i'th' wood, where he was found dead :
Then he came noblier up to her, and told her,
Marriage was his intent ; but she as nobly
(Belike to let him know she was married)
Told him, in an intelligible denial,
A chaste wife's truth shin'd thro' the greatest trial :
'There the prince died again.

Lodovico.

There's twice ; beware the third time.

Antonio.

The third time, he came here to them both in prison,
Brought a pistol with him, would have forc'd her again ;
But had ye seen how fairly then she slew him,
You would have shot applauses from your eyes :
Oh she came up so bravely to that prince,
Hot potent Lust, (for she slew no prince else)
With such a valiant discipline she destroy'd
That debosh'd ²¹ prince, Bad Desire ; and then, by him
So bravely too fetch'd off, that (to conclude)
Betwixt them they this wonder did contrive,

²¹ *Deboſh'd.*] See Mr. Steevens's note on *Tempeſt*, A. 3. S. 2.

They

They kill'd the prince, but kept your son alive.
[Discovers himself.]

Milan.

Antonio!

Omnes.

The prince!

Venice.

Come home, my sister, to my heart.

Verona.

And now Lorenzo is again my belov'd kinsman.

Antonio.

Oh, fir, here dwells virtue epitomiz'd,
Even to an abstract, and yet that so large
'Twill swell a book in folio.

Lodovico.

She swells beyond my wife then:
A pocket-book, bound in *decimo sexto*,
Will hold her virtues, and as much spare paper left
As will furnish five tobacco-shops.

Milan.

But here's the wonder; who is it was slain
In your apparel?

Philippo.

I will give them all the slip. [Offers to go.]

Antonio.

Here's a gentleman of Ferrara——

Philippo.

As you are noble——

Antonio.

That saw them fight: it was the slave was slain, fir,
I took before Palermo: he that kill'd him,
Took him but for a gentleman his equal;
And, as this eye-witness says, he in my apparel
Did kick the t'other first.

Philippo.

Nay, upon my life, fir,
He in your apparel gave the first kick: I saw them fight,
And I dare swear the t'other honest gentleman
Little thought he had slain any thing like the prince;
For I heard him swear, but half an hour before,
He never saw your grace.

Milan.

Milan.
Then he kill'd him fairly?

Philippo.
Upon my life, my lord.

Venice.
T'other had but his merit then : who dies,
And seeks his death, seldom wats others' eyes.

Antonio.
Let this persuade you I believe you noble ;
I have kept my word with you.

Philippo.
You have out-done me, sir,
In this brave exercise of honour : but let me,
In mine own person, thank you.

Omnes.
Philippo !

Philippo.
Unwittingly I did an ill (as 't happen'd)
To a good end : that slave I for you kill'd
Wanted but time to kill you : read that paper,
Which I found with him, I thinking by accident
You had intercepted it. We all have happily
Been well deceiv'd ; you are noble, just, and true ;
My hate was at your cloaths, my heart at you.

Verona.
An accident more strange hath seldom happen'd.

Lorenzo.
Philippo, my best friend, 'twixt shame and love,
Here let me lay thee now for ever.

Abstemio.

Heaven
Hath now plain'd all our rough woes smooth and even.

Milan.
At court, large relation in apt form
Shall tender past proceedings ; but to distinguish
(Excellent lady !) your unparallel'd praises
From those but seem, let this serve : bad women
Are nature's clouds, eclipsing her fair shine ;
The good, all-gracious, faint-like, and divine.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

EDITION.

THE CITY NIGHT-CAP:

O R,

Crede quod habes, & habes.

A TRAGI-COMEDY.

B Y

ROBERT DAVENPORT.

As it was acted with great Applause, by Her MAJESTIES SERVANTS,
at the PHOENIX in DRURY-LANE.

L O N D O N :

Printed by JA. COTTREL, for SAMUEL SPEED, at
the Signe of the *Printing Press*, in *St. Paul's*
Church-yard.

1661. 4to.



The Parson's Wedding.

THOMAS KILLEGREW, one of the sons of Sir Robert Killegrew, chamberlain to the Queen, was born at Hanworth, in the county of Middlesex, in the month of February, 1611. Although his writings are not wanting in those requisites which confer reputation on an author, yet he has been indebted for his fame more to the jests for which he was as much admired by his Sovereign as he was feared by the courtiers, than to any of his several publications. He seems to have been early intended for the court; and to qualify him for rising there, every circumstance of his education appears to have been adapted. In the year 1635, while upon his travels, he chanced to be at Loudon, and an eye-witness of the celebrated imposture of exorcising the devil out of several nuns belonging to a convent in that town. Of this transaction he wrote a very minute and accurate account¹, still in MSS. in the Pepysian library at Magdalen College; Cambridge. He was appointed page of honour to King Charles the First, and faithfully adhered to his cause, until the death of his master; after which, he attended his son in his exile; to whom he was highly acceptable, on account of his social and convivial qualifications. — He married Mrs. Cicilia Crofts, one of the maids of honour to Queen Henrietta. With this lady he had a dispute on the subject of jealousy, at which Thomas Carew was present, and wrote a poem, introduced into the Masque of *Calum Britannicum*, and afterwards a copy of verses on their nuptials, printed in his works².

¹ No. 8383.

² Carew's Poems, 1772, p. 129.

In the year 1651, he was sent to Venice as resident at that state, although, says Lord Clarendon², "the King" was much dissuaded from it, but afterwards his Majesty "was prevailed upon, only to gratify him (Killegrew), that in that capacity he might borrow money of English merchants for his own subsistence; which he did, and nothing to the honour of his master; but was at last compelled to leave the republic for his vicious behaviour; of which the Venetian ambassador complained to the king, when he came afterwards to Paris."—On his return from Venice, Sir John Denham wrote a copy of verses, printed in his works³, bantering the foibles of his friend Killegrew; who, from his account, was as little sensible to the inconveniences of exile as his royal master. His attachment to the interests of Charles the Second continued unabated until the Restoration, when he was appointed groom of the bed-chamber, and became so great a favourite with his Majesty, that he was admitted into his company on terms of the most unrestrained familiarity, and at times when audience was refused to the first ministers, and even on the most important occasions.—It does not appear that he availed himself of his interest with the King, either to amass a fortune, or to advance himself in the state; we do not find that he obtained any other preferment than the post of master of the revels, which he held with that of groom of the bed-chamber. Oldys says, he was king's jester at the same time; but although he might, and certainly did entertain his Majesty in that capacity, it can scarce be imagined to have been in consequence of any appointment of that kind. He died at Whitehall on the 29th of March, 1682, having in his life-time published the following plays:

1. *The Prisoners*: a Tragi-Comedy. Written at London, and acted at the Phoenix in Drury Lane.
2. *Claracilla*: a Tragi-Comedy. Written in Rome, and acted at the Phoenix in Drury Lane.

[Both these plays were printed in 12mo. 1641, with

² Life of Lord Clarendon, p. 216.

³ P. 41. Edition, 1719.

verses prefixed by H. Benet, afterwards the celebrated Earl of Arlington, Robert Waring, and William Cartwright:]

3. *The Princess; or Love at first Sight: a Tragi-Comedy.* Written in Naples.

4. *The Parson's Wedding: a Comedy.* Written at Basil, in Switzerland.

5. *The Pilgrim: a Tragedy.* Written in Paris.

6. *The First Part of Cicilia and Glorinda; or Love in Arms: a Tragi-Comedy.* Written in Turin.

7. *The Second Part of Cicilia and Glorinda; or Love in Arms: a Tragi-Comedy.* Written in Florence.

8. *Thomaso; or the Wanderer: a Comedy.* Written in Madrid.

9. *The Second Part of Thomaso; or the Wanderer.* Written in Madrid.

10. *The First Part of Bellamira, her Dream; or the Love of Shadows: a Tragi-Comedy.* Written in Venice.

11. *The Second Part of Bellamira, her Dream; or the Love of Shadows: a Tragi-Comedy.* Written in Venice.

[All the above plays were printed together in one volume, folio, 1664.]

Thomas Killegrew had two brothers, both dramatic writers, viz. Sir William Killegrew, author of *Ormasdes, Pandora, Selindra*, and *The Siege of Urbin*; and Dr. Henry Killegrew, a clergyman, author of a play called *The Conspiracy*, printed in 4to. 1638, and afterwards altered, and printed in folio, 1653, under the title of *Pallantus and Eudona*.

Dr. Henry Killegrew was father to Mrs. Anne Killegrew, a young lady celebrated for her wit, beauty, and virtue, and who was the writer of several poems, very highly esteemed by Mr. Dryden.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

- MR. CARELESS, *a gentleman, and a wit.*
 MR. WILD, *a gentleman, nephew to the Widow.*
 MR. JOLLY, *an humorous gentleman, and a courtier.*
 CAPTAIN, *a leading wit, full of designs.*
 PARSON, *a wit also, but over-reached by the Captain, and
his wanton.*
 MR. CONSTANT, } *two dull suitors to the lady Widow, and*
 MR. SAD, } *Mrs. Pleasant.*
 CROP the Brownist, *a Scrivener.*
 Lady WILD, *a rich (and somewhat youthful) widow.*
 Mrs. PLEASANT, *a handsome young gentlewoman, of a good
fortune.*
 Mrs. SECRET, *her (indifferent honest) woman.*
 Lady LOVEALL, *an old stallion-hunting widow.*
 FAITHFUL, *her (errant honest) woman.*
 Mrs. WANTON, *the Captain's livery punk, married to the
Parson by confederacy.*
 Bayds, Servants, Drawers, Fiddlers.

THE

The Parson's Wedding⁵.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter the Captain in choler, and Wanton.

Captain.

NO more; I'll sooner be reconcil'd to want or sickness, than that rascal; a thing, that my charity made sociable; one, that when I smil'd would fawn upon me, and wag his stern, like starv'd dogs; so nasty, the company cried for upon him; he stunk so of poverty, ale, and bawdry. So poor and despicable, when I reliev'd him, he could not avow his calling for want of a cassock, but stood at corners of streets, and whisper'd gentlemen in the ear, as they pass'd, and so deliver'd his wants like a messenger; which being done, the rogue vanished, and would dive at Westminster like a dabchick, and rise again at Temple-gate. The ingenuity of the rascal, his wit being snuff'd by want, burnt clear then, and furnish'd him with a bawdy jest or two, to take the company; but now the rogue shall find he has lost a patron.

Wanton.

As I live, if I had thought you would have been in such a fury, you should never have known it.

Captain.

Treacherous rogue! he has always rail'd against thee to me, as a danger his friendship ought to give me warning of; and nightly cry'd, Yet look back, and hunt not, with good-nature and the beauties of thy youth, that false woman; but hear thy friend, that speaks from sad experience.

⁵ This play was originally represented wholly by women. See *Dialogue on plays and players*, vol. 12.

374 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Wanton.

Did he say this?

Captain.

Yes, and swears ye are as unsatiate as the sea, as covetous, and as ungrateful; that you have your tempests too, and calms, more dangerous than it.

Wanton.

Was the slave so eloquent in his malice?

Captain.

Yes, faith, and urg'd, you (for your part) were never particular, and seldom found.

Wanton.

Not found! why, he offer'd to marry me, and swore he thought I was chaste, I was so particular; and prov'd it, that consent was full marriage, by the first institution; and those that love, and lie together, and tell, have fulfilled all ceremonies now.

Captain.

Did he offer to marry thee?

Wanton.

Yes, yes.

Captain.

If ever then I deserv'd from thee, or if thou be'st dear to thyself, as thou hast any thing thou hop'st shall be safe or sound about thee, I conjure thee, take my counsel; marry him, to afflict him.

Wanton.

Marry him?

Captain.

If I have any power I shall prevail. Thou know'st he has a fat benefice, and leave me to plague him, till he give it me to be rid of thee.

Wanton.

Will you not keep me then?

Captain.

I keep thee! pr'ythee, wilt thou keep me? I know not why men are such fools to pay: we bring as much to the sport as women. Keep thee! I'd marry thee as soon; why, *that's wedding sin*: no, no keeping I: that you are not your own, is all that prefers you before wives.

Wanton.

Wanton.

I hope this is not real.

Captain.

Art thou such a stranger to my humour? why, I tell thee, I should hate thee if I could call thee mine, for I loath all women within my knowledge; and 'tis six to four, if I knew thy sign, I'd come there no more; a strange mistress makes every night a-new, and these are your pleasing sins. I had as lieve be good, as sin by course.

Wanton.

Then I am miserable.

Captain.

Not so, if you'll be instructed, and let me pass like a stranger when you meet me.

Wanton.

But have you these humours?

Captain.

Yes, faith; yet if you will observe them, though you marry him, I may perchance be your friend; but you must be sure to be coy; for to me the hunting is more pleasant than the quarry⁶.

Wanton.

But, if I observe this, will you be my friend hereafter?

Captain.

Firm as the day. Hark, I hear him; [*The Parson calls within*] I knew he would follow me, I gave him a small touch that waken'd his guilt. Resolve to indear yourself to him, which you may easily do, by taking his part when I have vex'd him. No dispute; resolve it, or as I live here I disclaim thee for ever.

Wanton.

'Tis well, something I'll do.

[*Exit Wanton.*]

Captain.

Open the door, I say, and let me in; your favourite and his tythes shall come no more here.

⁶ *Quarry.*] i. e. *The Game.* *Quarry* is a term both of Hunting and Falconry. The allusion here is to the former. *Quarrie* (as referring to the latter) according to Latham's explanation, "is taken for the fowle which is flowne at, and slaine at any time, especially when young hawks are flowne thereunto."

Enter Parson.

Parson.

Yes, but he shall ; 'tis not you, nor your brac'd drum, shall fright me hence, who can command the souls of men. I have read divine Seneca ; thou know'st nothing but the earthly part, and canst cry to that, Faces about ?

Captain.

Thou read Seneca ! thou steal'st his cover, to clothe thee, naked and wicked, that for money wouldst sell the share of the twelve, and art allowed by all that know thee, fitter to have been Judas, than Judas was, for treachery.

Parson.

Rail, do rail, my illiterate captain, that can only abuse by memory ; and should I live till thou couldst read my sentence, I should never die.

Captain.

No, ingrateful, live till I destroy thee ; and, thankless wretch, did all my care of thee deserve nothing but thy malice, and treacherous speaking darkly still ? with thy fine, no, not he, when any malicious discourse was made of me ; and by thy false faint, no, faith ; confess, in thy denials, whilst thy smiling excuses stood a greater and more dangerous evidence against me, than my enemies affidavits could have done.

Parson.

I'll lye for never a lean foldier of you all.

Captain.

I have for thee, flave, when I have been wondered at for keeping company with such a face ; but they were such as knew thee not ; all which thy looks deceiv'd, as they did me ; they are so simple they'd cozen a jury, and a judge that had wit would swear thou lyedst, should thou confess what I know to be true, and award Bedlam for

7 *Faces about.* } So in *Every Man in his Humour*, A. 3. S. 1.

" Good captain, faces about."

Scornful Lady, A. 5.

" Cutting Morecraft faces about."

And in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, Ralph, exercising his men, says,

" Double your files : as you were ; faces about."

thee ;

thee ; 'tis so strange and so new a thing, to find so much rogue lodge at the sign of the fool.

Parson.

Leave this injurious language, or I'll lay off my cassock ; for nothing shall privilege your bragger's tongue to abuse me, a gentleman, and a soldier ancients than thyself.

Captain.

Yes, thou wert so ; and now, I think on't, I'll recount the cause, which, it may be, thou hast forgot, through thy variety of sins ; it was a hue and cry, that follow'd thee a scholar, and found thee a soldier.

Parson.

Thou ly'st ; thou, and Scandal have but one tongue ; hers dwells with thy coward's teeth.

Captain.

Oh ! do you rage ? nay, I'll put the cause in print too : I am but a scurvy poet, yet I'll make a ballad shall tell how like a faithful disciple you follow'd your poor whore, till her martyrdom in the suburbs.

Parson.

I'll be reveng'd for this scandal.

Captain.

Then shall succeed, thy flight from the university, disguis'd into captain, only the outside was worse buff, and the inside more atheist than they ; furnish'd with an insolent faith, uncharitable heart, envious as old women, cruel and bloody as cowards ; thus arm'd at all points, thou went'st out, threatening God, and trembling at men.

Parson.

I'll be reveng'd, thou poor man of war, I'll be reveng'd.

Enter Wanton.

Wanton.

And why so bitter ? Whose house is this ? Who dares tell this story ?

Captain.

Why, sweet, hath he not treacherously broke into our cabinet, and would have stol'n thee thence ? by these hilts, I'll hang him ; and then I can conclude my ballad with, ~~take~~ *warning all Christian people by the same* : I will, you lean

378 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

lean slave; I'll prosecute thee, till thou art fain to hide in a servitor's gown again, and live upon crumbs with the robin red-breasts that haunt the hall, your old mess-mates. Do you snarl? I'll do't, I will, and put thee to fight with the dogs for the bones that but smell of meat; those that your hungry students have polish'd with their teeth.

Wanton.

If you do this, good captain, lieutenant, and company (for all your command, I think, is within your reach) I say, if you dare do this, I shall sing a song of one that bade stand, and made a carrier pay a dear rent for a little ground upon his majesty's highway.

Captain.

How now, mistress Wanton! what's this? what's this?

Parson.

This! 'tis matter for a jury; I'll swear, and positively. I'll hang thee, I'll do't, by this hand, let me alone to swear the jury out of doubt.

Captain.

But you are in jest, mistress Wanton, and will confess (I hope) this is no truth.

Wanton.

Yes, sir, as great a truth, as that you are in your un-pay'd-for scarlet. Fool! didst think, I'd quit such a friend, and his stay'd fortune, to rely upon thy dead pay, and hopes of a second covenant?

Captain.

His fortune! what is't? th'advowson of Tyburn deanry?

Parson.

No, nor rents brought in by long staff-speeches, that asks alms with frowns, till thy looks and speech have laid violent hands upon men's charity.

Wanton.

Let him alone; I'll warrant, he'll never be indicted for drawing any thing but his tongue, against a man.

Captain.

Very good.

Parson.

Dear mistress Wanton, you have won my heart, and I shall

shall live to doat upon you for abusing this impetuous captain. Will you listen to my old suit? will you marry me, and vex him? say, dare you do't without more disputes?

Captain.

'Twas a good question; she that dares marry thee, dares do any thing; she may as safely lie with the great bell upon her, and his clapper is less dangerous than thine.

Wanton.

Why, I pray?

Captain.

What a miserable condition wilt thou come to? his wife cannot be an honest woman; and if thou should'st turn honest, would it not vex thee to be chaste and pox'd, a saint without a nose? what kalendar will admit thee, by an incurable slave that's made of rogues flesh? consider that.

Wanton.

Why, that's something yet; thou hast nothing but a few scars, and a little old fame to trust to, and that scarce thatches your head.

Captain.

Nay then I see thou'rt base, and this plot not accident. And now I do not grudge him thee; go together, 'tis pity to part you, whore and parson, as consonant——

Wanton.

As whore and captain.

Captain.

Take her, I'll warrant her a breeder; I'll prophesy she shall lie with thy whole congregation, and bring an heir to thy parish, one that thou may'st enclose the common by his title, and recover it by common law.

Parson.

That's more than thy dear dam could do for thee, thou son of a thousand fathers, all poor soldiers, rogues, that ought mischiefs, no midwives for their birth. But I cry thee mercy, my patron has an estate of old iron by his side, with the farm of old ladies he scrapes a dirty living from.

Wanton.

Wanton.

He earn from an old lady ! hang him, he's only wicked in his desires ; and for adultery he cannot be condemn'd, though he should have the vanity to betray himself. God forgive me for belying him so often as I have done ; the weak-chin'd slave hir'd me once to say, I was with child by him.

Captain.

This is pretty, farewell ; and may the next pig thou farrow'st have a promising face ; without the dad's fool or gallows in't, that all may swear, at first sight, that's a bastard ; and it shall go hard but I'll have it call'd mine. I have the way, 'tis but praising thee, and swearing thou art honest before I am ask'd : you taught me the trick.

Parson.

Next levee I'll preach against thee, and tell them what a piece you are ; your drum and borrowed scarf shall not prevail, nor shall you win with charms half ell long ; (hight ferret ribband) the youth of our parish, as you have done.

Captain.

No, lose no time, pr'ythee study and learn to preach, and leave railing against the surplice, now thou hast preach'd thyself into linen. Adieu, Abigal, adieu, heir apparent to sir Oliver Marr-text ; to church, go ; I'll send a beadle shall sing your Epithalamium.

Parson.

Adieu, my captain of a tame band ; I'll tell your old lady, how you abused her breath, and swore you earn'd your money harder than those that dig in the mines for't. [*Exit Captain.*] A fart fill thy sail, captain of a gally foist^s.—He's gone : come, sweet, let's to church immediately, that I may go and take my revenge ; I'll make him wear thin breeches.

^s *Gally foist.*] A *gally foist* was the name of a pleasure boat, or one used on particular days for pomp and state. The Lord Mayor's and Company's Barges were sometimes formerly called *The City Galley foists*. See *Wood's South East View of the City and part of Southwark*, as it appeared about the year 1599.

Wanton.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 391

Wanton.

But if you should be such a man as he says you are; what would my friends say, when they hear I have cast myself away?

Parson.

He says! hang him, lean, mercenary, provant rogue; I knew his beginning, when he made the stocks lousy, and swarm'd so with vermin, we were afraid he would have brought that curse upon the county—He says! but what matters what he says? a rogue, by fire and dam! his father was a broad fat peddler, a what-do-you-lack, fir, that haunted good houses, and stole more than he bought; his dam was a gypsy, a pilfering canting Sibyl in her youth, and she suffered in her old age for a witch: poor Stromwell, the rogue was a perpetual burthen to her, she carried him longer at her back than in her belly; he dwelt there, till she lost him one night in the great frost upon our common, and there he was found in the morning candy'd in ice: a pox of their charity that thaw'd him; you might smell a rogue then in the bud; he is now run away from his wife.

Wanton.

His wife?

Parson.

Yes, his wife; why, do you not know he's married according to the rogues liturgy? a left-handed bridegroom; I saw him take the ring from a tinker's dowager.

Wanton.

Is this possible?

Parson.

Yes, most possible, and you shall see how I'll be reveng'd on him; I will immediately go seek the ordinance against reformadoes.

Wanton.

What ordinance?

Parson.

Why, they do so swarm about the town, and are so destructive to trade and all civil government, that the state has declared, no person shall keep above two colonels and four captains (of what trade soever) in his family;

382 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

mily; for now the war is done, broken breech, wood-monger, rag-man, butcher, and link-boy, (comrades that made up the ragged regiment in this holy war) think to return and be admitted to serve out their times again.

Wanton.

Your ordinance will not touch the captain, for he is a known foldier.

Parson.

He a captain! an apocryphal modern one, that went convoy once to Brainford with those troops that conducted the contribution-puddings in the late holy war, when the city ran mad after their russet Levites, apron-rogues, with horn hands. Hang him, he's but the sign of a soldier; and I hope to see him hang'd for that commission, when the king comes to his place again.

Wanton.

You abuse him, now he's gone; but——

Parson.

Why, dost thou think I fear him? no, wench, I know him too well for a cowardly slave, that dares as soon eat his fox^o, as draw it in earnest; the slave's noted to make a conscience of nothing but fighting.

Wanton.

Well, if you be not a good man, and a kind husband——

Parson.

Thou know'st the proverb, as happy as the parson's wife, during her husband's life.

^o *As soon eat his fox.*] A fox was formerly a cant word for a sword.

So in Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, A. 2. S. 6.

"What would you have, sister, of a fellow that knows nothing but
"a basket hilt and an old fox in't?"

Philaster, by Beaumont and Fletcher, A. 4.

"I made my father's old fox fly about his ears."

Henry Vth by Shakspeare, A. 4. S. 4.

"—— Thou dy'st on point of fox."

See Mr. Steevens's note on the latter passage, where many passages of our ancient writers are produced to prove the explanation.

SCENE

SCENE II.

Enter mistress Pleasant, widow Wild her aunt, and Secret her woman, above in the musick room, as dressing her; a glass, a table, and she in her night-cloaths.

Pleasant.

Secret, give me the glass, and see who knocks:

Widow.

Niece, what, shut the door? as I live, this musick was meant to you, I know my nephew's voice.

Pleasant.

Yes, but you think his friend's has more musick in't.

Widow.

No, faith, I can laugh with him, or so, but he comes no nearer than my lace.

Pleasant.

You do well to keep your smock betwixt.

Widow.

Faith, wench, so wilt thou and thou beest wife, from him and all of them; and be-rul'd by me, we'll abuse all the sex, till they put a true value upon us.

Pleasant.

But dare you forbid the travel'd gentlemen, and abuse them and your servant, and swear, with me, not to marry in a twelve-month, though a lord bait the hook, and hang out the sign of a court Cupid, whipt by a country widow? then I believe we may have mirth cheaper than at the price of ourselves, and some sport with the wits that went to lose themselves in France.

Widow.

Come, no dissembling, lest I tell your servant, when he returns, how much you're taken with the last new fashion.

Secret.

Madam, 'tis almost noon, will you not dress yourself to-day?

Widow.

She speaks as if we were boarders; pr'ythee, wench,
is

384 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

is not the dinner our own? sure my cook shall lay by my own roast till my stomach be up.

Pleasant.

But there may be company, and they will say, we take too long time to trim. Secret, give me the flowers my servant sent me, he sware 'twas the first the wench made of the kind.

Widow.

But when he shall hear you had musick sent you to-day, 'twill make him appear in his old cloaths.

Pleasant.

Marry, I would he would take exception, he should not want ill usage to rid me of his trouble. As I live, custom has made me so acquainted with him, that I now begin to think him not so displeasing as at first; and if he fall not out with me, I must with him, to secure myself. Sure (aunt) he must find sense and reason absent; for when a question knocks at his head, the answer tells that there is no body at home. I ask'd him th'other day, if he did not find a blemish in his understanding; and he sware a great oath, not he. I told him 'twas very strange, for fool was so visible an eye-fore, that neither birth nor fortune could reconcile to me.

Widow.

Faith, methinks his humour is good, and his purse will buy good company, and I can laugh and be merry with him sometimes.

Pleasant.

Why, pray (aunt) take him to yourself, and see how merry we will be. I can laugh at any body's fool, but mine own.

Widow.

By my troth, but that I have married one fool already, you should not have him. Consider, he asks no portion, and yet will make a great jointure; a fool with these conveniences, a kind loving fool, and one that you may govern, makes no ill husband, niece: there are other arguments too, to bid a fool welcome, which you will find without teaching; think of it, niece; you may lay out your affection to purchase some dear wit, or judgment of
the

the city, and repent, at leisure, a good bargain, in this fool.

Pleasant.

Faith, aunt, fools are cheap in the butchery, and dear in the kitchen; they are such unfavoury insipid things, that there goes more charge to the sauce than the fool is worth, ere a woman can confidently serve him, either to her bed or board: then if he be a loving fool, he troubles all the world a days, and me all night.

Secret.

'Friendship-love, madam, has a remedy for that.

Pleasant.

See, if the air of this place has not inclin'd Secret to be a bawd already. No, Secret, you get no gowns that way, upon my word; if I marry, it shall be a gentleman that has wit and honour, though he has nothing but a sword by his side; such a one naked is better than a fool with all his trappings, bells, and baubles.

Widow.

Why, as I live, he's a handsome fellow, and merry; mine is such a sad soul, and tells me stories of lovers that dy'd in despair, and of the lamentable end of their mistresses (according to the ballad) and thinks to win me by example.

Pleasant.

Faith, mine talks of nothing but how long he has lov'd me; and those that know me not, think I am old, and still finds new causes (as he calls them) for his love. I ask'd him the other day if I chang'd so fast or no.

Widow.

But what think'st thou, Secret; my nephew dances well, and has a handsome house in the Piazza.

Pleasant.

Your nephew! not I, as I live; he looks as if he would be woo'd; I'll warrant you, he'll never begin with a woman till he has lost the opinion of himself; but since you are so courteous, I'll speak to his friend, and let him know how you suffer for him.

Widow.

Him! marry, God bless all good women from him. Why, he talks as if the dairy-maid and all her cows could not serve his turn: then they wear such bawdy breeches, 'twould startle an honest woman to come in their company,

for fear they should break, and put her to count from the fall of them; for I'll warrant, the year of the Lord would sooner out of her head than such a fight.

Pleasant.

I am not such an enemy now to his humour as to your nephew's. He rails against our sex, and thinks, by beating down the price of a woman, to make us despair of merchants: but, if I had his heart-strings tied on a true lover's knot, I would so firke him, till he found physic in a rope.

Secret.

He's a scurvy-tongu'd fellow, I'm sure of that; and if I could have got a staff, I had mark'd him.

Widow.

What did he do to thee, Secret?

Pleasant.

Why, he swore, he had a better opinion of her than to think she had her maidenhead: but if she were that fool, and had preserv'd the toy, he swore he would not take the pains of fetching it, to have it. I confess, I would fain be reveng'd on them, because they are so blown up with opinion of their wit.

Widow.

As I live, my nephew travels still. The sober honest Ned Wild will not be at home this month.

Pleasant.

What say you? will you abuse them and all the rest, and stand to my first proposition?

Widow.

Yes, faith, if it be but to bury my servant, Sad; for he cannot last above another fall; and how, think you, will your servant take it?

Pleasant.

Mine! Oh, God help me, mine's a healthy fool. I would he were subject to pine, and take things unkindly; there were some hope to be rid of him; for I'll undertake to use him as ill as any body.

Widow.

As I live, I am easily resolv'd; for if I would marry, I know neither who nor what humour to chuse.

Secret.

By my troth, madam, you are hard to please, else the courtier might have serv'd turn.

Widow.

Widow.

Serve turn ! Pr'ythee what haste, Secret, that I should put myself to bed with one I might make a shift with ? When I marry, thou shalt cry, Ay marry, madam, this is a husband, without blushing, wench, and none of your so-so husbands. Yet, he might half overcome my aversion, I confess.

Pleasant.

Overcome ! I think so : he might have won a city his way ; for when he saw you were resolv'd he should not eat with you, he would set himself down as if he meant to besiege us, and had vow'd never to rise till he had taken us in ; and because our sex forbade force, he meant to do it by famine. Yet you may stay, and miss a better market : for, hang me, I am of Secret's opinion, he had but two faults ; a handsome fellow, and too soon deny'd.

Widow.

'Tis true, he was a handsome fellow, and a civil, that I shall report him ; for as soon as it was given him to understand, I desir'd he would come no more, I never saw him since, but by chance.

Pleasant.

Why did you forbid him ?

Widow.

There were divers exceptions ; but that which anger'd me then, was, he came with the king's letters patents, as if he had been to take up a wife for his majesty's use.

Pleasant.

Alas ! was that all ? Why, 'tis their way at court, a common course among them : and was it not one the king had a great care of ? When my mother was alive, I had such a packet from the court directed unto me, I bid them pay the post, and make the fellow drink ; which he took as ill as I could wish, and has been ever since such a friendly enemy——

Widow.

Nay, as I live, she was for the captain too: his scarf and feather won her heart.

Secret.

Truly, madam, never flatter yourself ; for the gentleman did not like you so well, as to put you to the trouble of saying no.

332 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Pleasant.

Lord, how I hated and dreaded that scarf and buff-coat !

Secret.

Why, mistress Pleasant, a captain is an honourable charge.

Widow.

Prythee, Secret, name them no more. Colonel and captain, commissioner, free-quarters, ordnance and contribution ; when Buff utters these words, I tremble and dread the sound : it frights me still when I do but think on them. Cuds body, they're twigs of the old rod, wench, that whipt us so lately.

Pleasant.

Ay, ay, and they were happy days, wench, when the captain was a lean poor humble thing, and the soldier tame, and durst not come within the city, for fear of a constable and a whipping-post. They know the penal statutes give no quarter. Then Buff was out of countenance, and skulk'd from alehouse to alehouse ; and the city had no militia but the sheriff's men. In those merry days, a bailiff trode the streets with terror, when all the chains in the city were rusty but Mr. Sheriff's ; when the people knew no evil but the constable and his watch. Now, every committee has as much power, and as little manners, and examines with as much ignorance, impertinence, and authority, as a constable in the king's key.

[People talking without-]

Widow.

See, who's that so loud ?

Secret.

The men you talk'd of, newly come to town. —

[Exeunt omnes.]

S C E N E III.

*Enter Jack Constant, Will Sad, Jolly, and a Footman :
they comb their beads, and talk¹⁰.*

Jolly.

REMEMBER our covenants, get them that can, all friends ; and be sure to dispatch the plot, to carry them

¹⁰ — *they comb their beads, and talk.*] This custom, strange as it would now appear, was the constant practice of gentlemen in the last century.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 389

them into the country, lest the brace of newcome monfieurs get them.

Constant.

Those flesh-flies! I'll warrant thee from them: yet 'twas foolishly done of me to put on this gravity. I shall break out, and return to myself, if you put me to a winter's wooing.

Sad.

A little patience does it; and I am content to suffer any thing till they're out of town. Secret says, they think my pale face proceeds from my love.

Jolly.

Does she? That shall be one hint to advance your designs and my revenge; for so she be cozen'd, I care not who does it, for scorning me, who (by this hand) lov'd her pariously.

Footman.

Sir, what shall I do with the horses?

Sad.

Carry them to Bramsted's.

Footman.

What shall I do with your worship's?

Jolly.

Mine? Take him, hamstring him, kill him, any thing to make him away, left, having such a conveniency, I be betray'd to another journey into the country. Gentlemen, you are all welcome to my country-house. Charing-cross, I am glad to see thee, with all my heart.

Constant.

What! not reconcil'd to the country yet?

century. When on visits, either of ceremony or business, or even in company of ladies, and at public places, their constant amusement was to comb their hair or wigs: and the fashion continued until the reign of Queen Anne.—Dryden alludes to it, in the Prologue to *Almanzor and Almabide*:

“But, as when vizard masque appears in pit,

“Straight every man, who thinks himself a wit,

“Perks up; and managing *his comb* with grace,

“With his white wig sets off his nut-brown face.”

And Mincing, in *The Way of the World*, says,

“The gentlemen stay but to comb, madam, and will wait on you.”

These instances I am indebted for to Mr. Stevens.

390 THE PARSON'S WEDDING,

Sad.

He was not long enough there, to see the pleasure of it,

Jolly.

Pleasure! what is't call'd? walking, or hawking, or shooting at butts?

Constant.

You found other pleasures, or else the story of the meadow is no gospel.

Jolly.

Yes, a pox upon the necessity! Here I could as soon have taken the cow, as such a milk-maid.

Sad.

The wine and meat's good, and the company.

Jolly.

When, at a Tuesday meeting, the country comes in to a match at two shillings rubbers, where they conclude at dinner what shall be done this parliament, railing against the court and pope, after the old Elizabeth-way of preaching, till they are drunk with zeal; and then the old knight of the shire from the board's-end, in his coronation-breeches, vies clinches with a silenc'd minister, a rogue that rail'd against the reformation, merely to be eas'd of the trouble of preaching.

Constant.

Nay, as I live, now you are to blame, and wrong him. The man's a very able man.

Jolly.

You'll be able to say so one day, upon your wife's report. I would he were gelt, and all that hold his opinion. By this good day, they get more souls than they save.

Sad.

And what think you of the knight's son? I hope, he's a fine gentleman, when his green suit and his blue stockings are on; and the welcomest thing to Mrs. Abigail, but Tib and Tom in the stock¹¹.

Jolly.

Who, Mr. Jeoffry? Hobinol the second. By this life,

¹¹ Tib and Tom in the stock.] Terms at the game of Gleeck; which she is supposed to love immoderately. S. P.

'tis a very veal, and he licks his nose like one of them. By his discourse, you'd guess he had eaten nothing but hay. I wonder he doth not go on all four too, and hold up his leg when he stales. He talks of nothing but the stable. The cobbler's black-bird at the corner has more discourse. He has not so much as the family jest, which these Coridons use to inherit! I pos'd him in Booker's prophecies ¹², till he confess'd he had not master'd his almanack yet.

Constant.

But what was that you whisper'd to him in the hall?

Jolly.

Why, the butler and I, by the intercession of March-beer, had newly reconcil'd him to his dad's old cod-piece corset in the hall, which, when his zeal was up, he would needs throw down, because it hung upon a cross.

¹² *Booker's prophecies.*] William Lilly gives the following account of *John Booker*, the person here mentioned: — he “was born in Manchester, in the year 1601; was in his youth well instructed in the Latin tongue, which he understood very well. He seemed, from his infancy, to be designed for astrology; for, from the time he had any understanding, he would be always poring on, and studying almanacks. He came to London at fitting years, and served an apprenticeship to an haberdasher in Lawrence Lane, London: but either wanting stock to set up, or disliking the calling, he left his trade, and taught to write, at Hadley, in Middlesex, several scholars in that school. He wrote singularly well, both secretary and Roman. In process of time, he served Sir Christopher Clethero, Knight, alderman of London, as his clerk, being a city justice of peace. He also was clerk to Sir Hugh Hammersley, alderman of London: both which he served with great credit and estimation, and, by that means, became not only well known, but as well respected, of the most eminent citizens of London, even to his dying-day.

“He was an excellent proficient in astrology; whose excellent verses upon the twelve months, framed according to the configurations of each month, being blessed with success according to his predictions, procured him much reputation all over England. He was a very honest man; abhorred any deceit in the art he studied; had a curious fancy in judging of thefts, and as successful in resolving love-questions. He was no mean proficient in astronomy; he understood much in physio; was a great admirer of the anti-monial cup; not unlearned in chymistry, which he loved well, but did not practise. He died in 1667.”

Constant.

But what think you of my neighbour? I hope, her charity takes you,

Jolly.

Yes, and her old waiting-woman's devotion. She sigh'd in the pew behind me. A Dutch skipper belches not so loud, or so sour. My lady's miserable sinner, with the white eyes, she does so squeeze out her prayers, and so wring out, *Have mercy upon us*. I warrant her, she has a waiting-woman's sting in her conscience. She looks like a dirty-soul'd bawd.

Constant.

Who is this, my lady Freedom's woman, that he describes?

Jolly.

The same: the independent lady. I have promis'd to send her a cripple or two by the next carrier. Her subject-husband would needs shew me his house one morning. I never visited such an hospital; it stunk like Bedlam; and all the servants were carrying pultices, jalaps, and glisters, and several remedies for all diseases but his. The man sigh'd to see his estate crumbling away. I counsell'd him either to give or take an ounce of ratsbane, to cure his mind.

Constant.

She is my cousin; but he made such a complaint to me, I thought he had married the company of Surgeons-hall: for his directions to me for several things for his wife's use, were fitter for an apothecary's shop than a lady's closet.

Jolly.

I advis'd him to settle no jointure but her old stills, and a box of instruments, upon her. She hates a man with all his limbs. A wooden leg, a crutch, and *fistula in ano*, wins her heart. Her gentleman-usher broke his leg last dog-days, merely to have the honour to have her set it: a foul rank rogue! and so full of salt humours, that he pos'd a whole college of old women with a gangrene, which spoil'd the jest, and his ambling before my lady; by applying a hand-saw to his gart'ring place; and now the
rogue

rogue wears booted bed-staves, and destroys all the young ashes to make him legs.

Sad.

I never saw such a nasty affection : she would ha' done well in the incurable, a hand-maid to have waited on the cripples.

Jolly.

She converses with naked men, and handles all their members, tho' never so ill affected, and calls the fornication charity. All her discourse to me was flat bawdry ; which I could not chide, but spoke as flat as she, till she rebuk'd me, calling mine beastliness, and hers natural philosophy. By this day, if I were to marry, I would as soon have chosen a drawn whore out of mine own hospital, and cure the sins of her youth, as marry a she-chirurgion ; one that, for her sins in her first husband's days, cures all the crimes of her sex in my time. I would have him call her Chiron, the Centaur's own daughter, a chirurgion by fire and dam, Apollo's own colt. She's red-hair'd too, like that bonny beast with the golden mane and flaming tail.

Sad.

You had a long discourse with her, Jolly : what was't about ?

Jolly.

I was advising her to be divorc'd, and marry the man in the almanack : 'twould be fine pastime for her to lick him whole.

Sad.

By this day, I never saw such a mule as her husband is, to bear with her madness. The house is a good house, and well furnish'd.

Jolly.

Yes ; but 'tis such a sight to see great French beds full of found children, sons of batchelors, priests heirs, Bride-well orphans : there they lie by dozens in a bed, like sucking rabbits in a dish, or a row of pins ; and then they keep a whole dairy of milch-whores to suckle them.

Sad.

She is successful, and that spoils her, and makes her deaf

394 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

deaf to counsel. I bade him poison two or three, to disgrace her ; for the vanity and pride of their remedies make those women more diligent than their charity.

Jolly.

I ask'd him why he married her ; and he confess'd, if he had been sound, he had never had her.

Constant.

He confess'd, she cur'd him of three claps before he married her.

Jolly.

Yes ; and I believe some other member (though then ill-affected) pleaded more than his tongue ; and the rogue is like to find her business still ; for he flies at all. My God, I owe thee thanks for many things ; but 'tis not the least I am not her husband, nor a country-gentleman, whither, I believe, you cannot easily seduce me again, unless you can persuade London to stand in the country. To Hyde Park, or so, I may venture upon your lady-fair days, when the silly-foals of fifteen come kicking in, with their manes and tails tied up in ribbands, to see their eyes roul and neigh when the spring makes their blood prick them ; so far I am with you, by the way of a country-gentleman and a beer-drinker.

Sad.

For all this dislike, Mr. Jolly, your greatest acquaintance lies amongst country-gentlemen.

Jolly.

Ay, at London : there your country-gentlemen are good company ; where to be seen with them is a kind of credit. I come to a mercer's shop in your coach ; Boy, call your master : he comes bare ; I whisper him, Do you know the Constants and the Sads of Norfolk ? Yes, yes, he replies, and strokes his beard. They are good men, cry I : Yes, yes. No more ; cut me off three suits of fatten. He does it, and, in the delivery, whispers, Will these be bound ? Fish ! drive on, coachman : speak with me to-morrow.

Constant.

And what then ?

Jolly.

Jolly.

What then! why, come again next day.

Sad.

And what if the country-gentleman will not be bound?

Jolly.

Then he must fight.

Sad.

I would I had known that before I had sign'd your bond, I would have set my sword sooner than my seal to it.

Jolly.

Why, if thou repent, there's no harm done: fight rather than pay it,

Sad.

Why, do you think I dare not fight?

Jolly.

Yes, but I think thou hast more wit than to fight with me; for if I kill thee, 'tis a fortune to me, and others will sign in fear; and if thou should'st kill me, any body that knows us would swear 'twere very strange, and cry, There's God's just judgment now upon that lewd youth, and thou procur'st his hangman's place at the rate of thy estate.

Constant.

By this hand, he is in the right; and, for mine, I meant to pay when I sign'd. Hang it, never put good fellows to say, Pr'ythee give me a hundred pounds.

Sad.

'Tis true, 'tis a good janty way of begging; yet, for being kill'd, if I refuse it—would there were no more danger in the widow's unkindness than in your fighting. I would not mistrust my design.

Jolly.

Why ay, there's a point now in nicety of honour, I should kill your for her; for you know I pretended first; and it may be if I had writ sad lines to her, and hid myself in my cloak, and haunted her coach, it may be in time she would have fought me: not I, by this hand, I'll not trouble myself for a wench; and married widows are but customary authoriz'd wenches.

Constant.

Being of that opinion, how can'st thou think of marrying one?

Jolly.

396 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Jolly.

Why, faith, I know not; I thought to rest me, for I was run out of breath with pleasure, and grew so acquainted with sin, I would have been good, for variety: in these thoughts 'twas my fortune to meet with this widow, handsome, and of a clear fame.

Constant.

Didst love her?

Jolly.

Yes, faith: I had love, but not to the disease that makes men sick; and I could have lov'd her still, but that I was angry to have her refuse me, for a fault I told her of myself, so I went no more.

Sad.

Did she forbid you but once?

Jolly.

Faith, I think, I slip't a fair opportunity, a handsome wench, and three thousand pounds *per annum* in certainty, besides the possibility of being saved.

Constant.

Which now you think desperate?

Widow and Pleasant looking out at a window.

Pleasant.

That is you; cross or pile, will you have him yet or no?

Widow,

Peace! observe them.

Jolly.

Faith, no, I do not despair; but I cannot resolve.

Enter Wild, Careless, and the Captain, going in haste; he comes in at the middle door.

Widow.

Who are those?

Careless.

Captain, whither in such haste? what, defeated? Call you this a retreat, or a flight from your friends?

Pleasant.

Your nephew, and his governor, and his friend! Here will be a scene! sit close, and we may know the secret of their hearts.

Widow.

Widow.

They have not met since they return'd : I shall love this bay-window ¹².

Captain.

Pr'ythee let me go : there's mischief a boiling ; and if thou shak'st me once more, thou wilt jumble a lye together I have been hammering this hour.

Careless.

A pox upon you ! a studying lyes !

Captain.

Why, then they are no lyes, but something in the praise of an old lady's beauty ; what do you call that ?

Jolly.

Who are those ?

[*They spy each other.*]

Sad.

Is't not the captain and my friend ?

[*Jolly salutes them ; then he goes to the captain to embrace him ; the captain stands in a French posture ¹³, and slides from his old way of embracing.*]

Jolly.

Ned Wild ! Tom Careless ! what ail'st thou ? do'st thou scorn my embraces ?

¹² *I shall love this bay window.*] A bay window is what we now distinguish by the name of a bow window. The term frequently occurs in ancient writers.

So *Second part of Antonio and Mellida*, by Marston, A. 1. S. 3.

" — Three times I gaspt at shades :

" And thrice, deluded by erroneous sense,

" I forc't my thoughts make stand ; when loe I op't

" A large bay window, through which the night

" Struck terror to my soul."

Cynthia's Revels, A. 4. S. 3.

" In which time (retiring myself into a bay window) the beauteous lady Annabel, &c."

A Chast Mayd in Cheapside, by Middleton, 1630. p. 62.

" In troth a match, wench :

" We are simply stock't, with cloath of tissue cushions,

" To furnish out bay windows."

The captain stands in a French posture, &c.] So in the Epilogue to *Revering Love, or the Mock Astrologer*, by Dryden :

" Up starts a Mounseur, now come o'er ; and warm

" In the French stoop ; and the pull back o' th' arm ;

" Morbleau dit il, &c."

398 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Captain.

I see you have never been abroad, else you would know how to put a value upon those, whose careful observation brought home the most exquisite garb and courtship that Paris could sell us.

Jolly.

A pox on this fooling, and leave off ceremony.

Captain.

Why then agreed : off with our masks, and let's embrace like the old knot. *[They embrace.]*

Jolly.

Faith, say where have you spent these three years time ? in our neighbour France ? or have you ventur'd o'er the Alps, to see the seat of the Cæsars ?

Sad.

And can tell us (ignorant, doom'd to walk upon our own land) how large a seat the goddess fix'd her flying Trojans in.

Constant.

Yes, yes, and have seen, and drank (perhaps) of Tyber's famous stream.

Jolly.

And have been where Æneas buried his trumpeter and his nurse. Tom looks as if he had suck'd the one, and had a battle sounded by the other, for joy to see our nation, ambitious not to be understood or known when they come home.

Captain.

So, now I'm welcome home ; this is freedom, and these are friends, and with these I can be merry ; for, gentlemen, you must give me leave to be free too.

Jolly.

So you will spare us miserable men, condemn'd to London, and the company of a Michaelmas-term, and never travel'd those countries that set mountains on fire a purpose to light us to our lodging.

Wild.

Why this is better than to stay at home, and lye by hear-say, wearing out yourselves and fortunes like your clothes, to see her that hates you for being so fine ; then
appearing

appearing at a play, drefs'd like some part of it, while the company admire the mercer's and the taylor's work, and swear they have done their parts to make you fine gentlemen.

Careless.

Then leap out of your coach, and throw your cloak over your shoulder; the casting-nets to catch a widow; while we have seen the world, and learn'd her customs.

Captain.

Yes, fir, and return'd perfect monsieurs.

Sad.

Yes, even to their diseases: I confess my ignorance, I cannot amble, nor ride like St. George at Waltham ¹⁵.

Jolly.

Yet, upon my conscience, he may be as welcome with a trot as the other with his pace; and faith, Jack, (to be a little free) tell me, do'st thou not think thou hadst been as well to pass here, with that English nose thou carry'dst hence, as with the French tongue thou hast brought home? [*The captain has a patch over his nose.*]

Captain.

It is an accident, and to a soldier 'tis but a scar: 'tis true, such a sign upon Mr. Jolly's face had been as ill as a *red cross*, and *Lord have mercy upon us*, at his lodging-door, to have kept women out of court.

Jolly.

For aught you know of the court.

Captain.

I know the court, and thee, and thy use, and how you serve but as the handsomest moveables; a kind of implement above stairs, and look much like one of the old court-servants in the hangings.

Wild.

But that they move, and look fresher, and your apparel more modern.

Careless.

Yet, faith, their office is the same, to adorn the room,

¹⁵ *Saint George at Waltham.*] The sign of an inn there. See *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*, vol. 5.

400 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

and be gaz'd on. Alas, he's sad ! courage, man, these riding-clothes will serve thee at the latter day.

Captain.

Which is one of their grievances ; for nothing troubles them more than to think they must appear in a foul winding-sheet, and come undress'd.

Jolly.

Gentlemen, I am glad to find you know the court ; we know a traveller too, especially when he is thus chang'd and exchang'd, as your worships, both in purse and person, and have brought home foreign visages and inscriptions.

Constant.

Why that's their perfection, their ambition to have it said, There go those that have profitably observ'd the vices of other countries, and made them their own ; and the faults of several nations, at their return, are their parts.

Jolly.

Why there's Jack Careless, he carried out as good staple-manners as any was in Suffolk, and now he is return'd with a shrug, and a trick to stand crooked, like a scurvy bow unbent ; and looks as if he would maintain oil and sallads against a chine of beef. I knew a great beast of this kind, it haunted the court much, and would scarcely allow us fully reduc'd to civility, for serving up mutton in whole joints.

Constant.

What, silent ?

Sad.

Faith, the captain is in a study.

Jolly.

Do, do, conn the rivers and towns perfectly, captain ; thou may'st become intelligencer to the people, and lye thy two sheets a week in Carranto's too,

Constant.

And could you not make friends at court to get their pictures cut ugly, in the corner of a map, like the old navigators ?

Jolly.

We'll see, we'll see.

Enter

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 401

Enter Widow and Pleasant above.

Widow.

I'll interrupt them. — Servant, you're welcome to town. How now, nephew? what, dumb? where are all our travel'd tongues?

Jolly.

Servant ¹⁶⁴ who doth she mean? by this hand, I disclaim the title.

Pleasant.

Captain, Secret has taken notes, and desires you would instruct her in what concerns a waiting-woman, and an old lady.

Captain.

Very good! yet this shall not save your dinner.

Widow.

Nay, while you are in this humour I'll not sell your companies; and tho' Mr. Jolly be incens'd, I hope he will do me the favour to dine with me.

Jolly.

Faith, lady, you mistake me if you think I am afraid of a widow; for I would have the world know I dare meet her any where, but at bed. *[Exit Jolly.]*

Wild.

No more, aunt; we'll come; and if you will give us good meat, we'll bring good-humours and good stomachs.

[Widow shuts the curtain.]

Careless.

By this day, I'll not dine there: they take a pleasure to raise a spirit that they will not lay. I'll to Banks's.

Captain.

A pox forbid it! you shall not break company, now you know what we are to do after dinner.

Careless.

I will consent, upon condition you forbid the spiritual nonsense the age calls Platonic Love.

¹⁶ *Servant!*] The usual manner in which ladies formerly address their lovers. See Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, A. 4. S. 2. *Every Man out of his Humour*, A. 3. S. 9. Massinger's *Fatal Dowry*, A. 2. S. 2. *Baseful Lover*, A. 4. S. 1. *A very Woman*, A. 1. S. 1. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, A. 2. S. 1. and in most of the dramatic productions of the times.

Captain.

I must away too; but I'll be there at dinner — You will join in a plot after dinner?

Wild.

Any thing, good, bad, or indifferent, for a friend and mirth.

*[Exeunt all but the Captain.]**Captain.*

I must go, and prevent the rogue's mischief with the old lady.

[Exit Captain.]

A C T II. S C E N E I.

*Enter Jolly and the old lady Loveall.**Loveall.*

AWAY, unworthy, false, ingrateful! with what brow dar'st thou come again into my sight, knowing how unworthy you have been, and how false to love?

Jolly.

No, 'tis you are unworthy, and deserve not those truths of love I have paid here; else you would not believe every report that envy brings, and condemn, without hearing me, whom you have so often try'd and found faithful.

Loveall.

Yes, till I, too credulous, had pity on your tears; till I had mercy, you durst not be false.

Jolly.

Nor am not yet.

Loveall.

What do'st thou call false? is there a treachery beyond what thou hast done? When I had given my fame, my fortune, myself, and my husband's honour, all in one obligation, a sacrifice to that passion which thou seem'st to labour with despair of, to tell and brag of a conquest
o'er

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 403

O'er a woman, fool'd by her passion, and lost in her love to thee, unworthy! — *[She turns away her head.]*

Jolly.

By this day, 'tis as false as he that said it: hang him, son of a batchelor! a slave! that envying my fortune, in such a happiness as your love and chaste embraces, took this way to ruin it. Come, dry your eyes, and let the guilty weep: if I were guilty, I durst as soon approach a constable drunk, as come here: you know I am your slave.

Loveall.

You swore so, and honour made me leave to triumph over your miseries.

Jolly.

Do you repent that I am happy? if you do, command my death.

Loveall.

Nay, never weep, nor sit sadly; I am friends, so you will only talk and discourse; for 'tis your company I only covet.

Jolly.

No, you cannot forgive, because you have injur'd me: 'tis right woman's justice, accuse first; and harder to reconcile when they are guilty than when they are innocent, or else you would not turn from me thus.

Loveall.

You know your youth hath a strong power over me: turn those bewitching eyes away; I cannot see them with safety of mine honour.

Jolly.

Come, you shall not hide your face; there's a charm in it against those that come burnt with unchaste fires; for let but your eyes or nose drop upon his heart, it would burn it up, or quench it strait.

Loveall.

No cogging, you have injur'd me; and now, tho' my love plead, I must be deaf; my honour bids me; for you will not fear again to prove unworthy, when you find I am so easy to forgive — Why, you will not be uncivil?

[Jolly kisses her, and she shoves him away with her mouth.]

404 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Jolly.

So, the storm is laid ! I must have those pearls — She shov'd me away with her mouth ! I'll to her again.

Loveall.

Where are you ? what do you take me for ? why you will not be uncivil ?

[Still as he offers to touch her, she starts as if he pluck'd up her coats.]

Jolly.

Uncivil ! by thy chaste self I cannot, chick : thou hast such a terror, such a guard in those eyes, I dare not approach thee, nor can I gaze upon so much fire : pry'thee, firrah, let me hide me from their power here.

Loveall.

You presume upon the weakness of our sex : What shall I say or do, tyrant Love ?

Jolly.

There's a charm in those pearls ! pull them off ; if they have a frost in them, let me wear them, and then we are both safe.

Loveall.

I would you had taken them sooner ! I had then been innocent, and might with whiteness have worn my love, which I shall ne'er out-live.

Jolly.

Dear, do not too fast pour in my joys, lest I too soon reach my heaven.

Loveall.

Be gone, then, lest we prove (having gain'd that height) this sad truth in love, *the first minute after noon is night.*

Jolly.

Part now ? the gods forbid ! take from me first this load of joys you have thrown upon me, for 'tis a burthen harder to bear than sadness. I was not born till now ; this my first night in which I reap true blifs.

Loveall.

No, no, I would it had been your first night, then your falsehood had not given argument for these tears ; and I hate myself to think I should be such a foolish fly, thus again to approach your dangerous flame.

Jolly.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 405

Jolly.

Come, divert these thoughts : I'll go see your closet.

Loveall.

No, no, I swear you shall not.

Jolly.

You know I am going out of town for two days.

Loveall.

When you return I'll shew it you ; you will forget me else when you are gone, and at court.

Jolly.

Can your love endure delays ? or shall business thee from hence remove ? These were your own arguments. Come, you shall shew it me.

Loveall.

Nay, then I perceive what unworthy way your love would find. Ye gods, are all men false ?

Jolly.

As I live you shall stay : come, you ought to make me amends for stand'ring of me. Hang me if ever I told ; and he that reports it is the damn'dst rogue in a country. Come, I say——

[*He pulls her bodkin, that is tied in a piece of black bobbins.*]

Loveall.

Ah ! as I live, I will not, I have sworn. Do not pull me ; I will not be damn'd, I have sworn ——

[*He pulls her, and says this.*]

Jolly.

As I live, I'll break your bodkin then : a weeping tyrant ! Come, by this good day, you shall be merciful.

Loveall.

Why, you will not be uncivil ? you will not force me, will you ? As I live, I will not.

Jolly.

Nay, an' you be wilful, I can be stubborn too.

[*He pulls still.*]

Loveall.

Hang me, I'll call aloud ; Why, Nan ! Nay, you may force me ; but, as I live, I'll do nothing. [*Exeunt ambo.*]

SCENE II.

*Enter Captain.**Captain.*

A POX upon you, are you earth'd? the rogue has got her necklace of pearl; but I hope he will leave the rope to hang me in. How the pox came they so great? I must have some trick to break his neck, else the young rogue will work me out. 'Tis an excellent old lady, but I dare not call her so; yet would she were young enough to bear, we might do some good for our heirs, by leaving such a charitable brood behind. She's a woman after the first kind; 'tis but going in to her, and you may know her. Then she'll oblige so readily, and gives with greater thanks than others receive; takes it so kindly to be courted.—I am now to oblige her (as she calls it) by professing young Wild's love, and defring an assurance she's sensible of his sufferings; which tho' it be false, and beyond my commission, yet the hopes of such a new young thing, that has the vogue of the town for handsomest, 'twill so tickle her age, and so blow up her vanity, to have it said he is in love with her, and so endear her to me for being the means, that the parson's malice will be able to take no root——She comes; I must not be seen.——

*Enter Loveall and Jolly.**Loveall.*

Give me that letter; I'll swear you shall not read it.

Jolly.

Take it; I'll away: What time shall I call you in the evening? there's a play at court to-night.

Loveall.

I would willingly be there, but your ladies are so censorious and malicious to us young ladies in the town, especially to me, because the wits are pleas'd to afford me a visit, or so; I could be content else to be seen at
court,

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 407.

court. Pray what humour is the queen of? the captain of her guard I know.

Jolly.

The queen? who's that knocks at the back-door?—

[*The Captain knocks.*]

Loveall.

Smooth my band; I know not; go down that way, and look you be not false; if you should be false, I'll swear I should spoil myself with weeping.

Jolly.

Farewell! In the evening I'll call you. [*Exit Jolly.*]

Loveall.

Who's there? Captain, where have you been all this while? I might sit alone, I see, for you, if I could not find conversation in books.

[*She takes a book in her hand and sits down.*]

Captain.

Faith, madam, friends newly come to town engag'd me, and my stay was civility rather than desire: what book's that?

Loveall.

I'll swear he was a witch that writ it; for he speaks my thoughts as if he had been within me; the original, they say, was French.

Captain.

Oh, I know it, 'tis the Accomplish'd Woman; yourself, he means by this, while you are yourself.

Loveall.

Indeed, I confess, I am a great friend to conversation, if we could have it without suspicion; but the world's so apt to judge, that 'tis a prejudice to our honour now to salute a man.

Captain.

Innocence, madam, is above opinion, and your fame's too great to be shook with whispers.

Loveall.

You are ever civil, and therefore welcome. Pray, what news is there now in town? for I am reclus'd here; unless it be yours, I receive no visits; and I'll swear, I charg'd the wench to-day not to let you in; I wonder she let you come.

D d 4

Captain.

Captain.

Faith, madam, if it had been my own business, I should not have ventur'd so boldly; but the necessity that forces me to come concerns my friend, against whom if your mercy be now bounded with those strict ties of honour, and cold thoughts, which I have ever found guard your heart, my friend, a young and handsome man, is lost, is lost in his prime, and falls like early blossoms. But methinks you should not prove the envious frost to destroy this young man, this delicate young man, that has whole bundles of boys in his breeches; yet if you be cruel, he and they die, as useless as open-arises gather'd green.

[She must be earnest in her looks all the time he speaks, desirous to know who he speaks of.]

Loveall.

Good captain, out with the particular; what way can my charity assist him? you know by experience I cannot be cruel; remember how I fetch'd you out of a swoon, and laid you in my own bed.

Captain.

That act preserv'd a life, that has always been labour'd in your service; and I dare say, your charity here will find as fruitful a gratitude.

Loveall.

But I hope he will not be so uncivil as you were; I'll swear, I could have hang'd you for that rape, if I would have follow'd the law; but I forgave you upon condition you would do so again. But what's this young man you speak of?

Captain.

Such is my love to you and him, that I cannot prefer mine own particular before your content, else I'd have poison'd him ere I'd have brought him to your house.

Loveall.

Why, I pray?

Captain.

Because he's young, handsome, and of sound parts; that I am sure will ruin me here.

Loveall.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 409

Loveall.

His love may make all these beauties ; else I have an honour will defend me against him, were he as handsome as young Wild.

Captain.

Why ay, there it is ; that one word has remov'd all my fears and jealousies with a despair ; for that's the man whose love, life, and fortune, lies at your feet ; and if you were single, by lawful ways he would hope to reach what now he despairs of.

Loveall.

Let him not despair, love is a powerful pleader, and youth and beauty will assist him ; and if his love be noble, I can meet it ; for there's none that sacrifices more to friendship-love than I.

Captain.

My friend's interest makes me rejoice at this. Dare you trust me to say this to him, tho' it be not usual ? pray speak ; nay, you are so long still a resolving to be kind ! Remember, charity is as great a virtue as chastity, and greater, if we will hear nature plead ; for the one may make many maids, the other can but preserve one. But I know you will be persuaded ; let it be my importunity that prevail'd. Shall I bring him hither one evening ?

Loveall.

Why do you plead thus ? pray be silent, and when you see him, tell him he has a seat here, and I— [*She turns away.*]

Captain.

Out with it ; what is't ? Shall he call you mistress ? and his platonick ?

Loveall.

Away, away ; me ?

Captain.

No niceness ; is't a match ?

Loveall.

Lord, would I were as worthy as willing (pray tell him so) : he shall find me one of the humblest mistresses that ever he was pleased to honour with his affections.

Captain.

Dare you write this to him, and honour me with bearing it ?

410 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

it? I confess, I am such a friend to friendship-love too, that I would even bring him on my back to a midnight's meeting.

Loveall.

If you will stay here, I'll go in and write it. —

[She's going out, he calls her.]

Captain.

Madam, I forgot to ask your ladyship one question.

Loveall.

What was't!

Captain.

There happen'd a business last night betwixt Mr. Wild, and one Jolly, a courtier, that brags extremely of your favour; I swear, if it had not been for friends that interposed themselves, there had been mischief, for Mr. Wild was extream zealous in your cause.

Loveall.

Such a rascal I know. Villain, to bring my name upon the stage, for a subject of his quarrels! — I'll have him cudgel'd.

Captain.

And I'll answer he deserv'd it; for the quarrel ended in a bet of a buck-hunting-nag, that some time to-day he would bring a necklace and chain of pearl of yours (not stol'n, but freely given) to witness his power.

Loveall.

Did the vain rascal promise that?

Captain.

Yes; but we laugh at it.

Loveall.

So you might; and as I live, if the necklace were come from stringing, I'd send them both to Mr. Wild, to wear as a favour, to assure him I am his, and to put the vain slave out of countenance.

Captain.

Ay, marry, such a timely favour were worth a dozen letters, to assure him of your love, and remove all the doubts the other's discourse may put into his head; and faith I'd send him the chain now, and in my letter promise him the necklace; he'll deserve such a favour.

Loveall.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 415

Loveall.

I'll go in and fetch it immediately : will you favour me to deliver it ?

Captain.

I'll wait upon your ladyship.

Loveall.

I'll swear you shall not go in ; you know I forswore being alone with you.

[She goes and he follows her, she turns and bids him stay.]

Captain.

Hang me, I'll go in ; does my message deserve to wait an answer at the door ?

Loveall,

Ay, but you'll be naught.

Captain.

O, ne'er trust me if I break.

Loveall.

If you break, some such forfeit you'll lose ; well, come in for once.

Captain.

You are so suspicious.

Loveall.

I'll swear I have reason for't ; you are such another man.

[Exeunt.]

S C E N E III.

Enter Wanton and Bawd.

Wanton.

Is he gone ?

Bawd.

Yes, he's gone to the old Lady's, high with mischief.

Wanton.

Fare him well, easy fool : how the trout strove to be tickl'd ! and how does this ring become me ? ha ! they are fine kind of things, these wedding rings.

[She plays with a wedding-ring upon her finger.]

Bawd.

Besides the good custom of putting so much gold in 'em, they bring such conveniences along.

Wanton,

412 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Wanton.

Why ay, now I have but one to please; and if I please him, who dares offend me? and that wife's a fool that cannot make her husband one.

Bawd.

Nay, I am absolutely of opinion, it was fit for you to marry; but whether he be a good husband or no?

Wanton.

A pox of a good husband! give me a wise one; they only make the secure cuckolds, the cuckold in grain: for dye a husband that has wit but with an opinion thou art honest, and see who dares wash the colour out. Now your fool changes with every drop, doats with confidence in the morning, and at night jealous even to murder, and his love (Lord help us) fades like my gredaline petticoat ¹⁷.

Bawd.

This is a new doctrine.

Wanton.

'Tis a truth, wench, I have gain'd from my own observations, and the paradox will be maintain'd. Take wise men for cuckolds, and fools to make them; for your wife man draws eyes and suspicion with his visit, and begets jealous thoughts in the husband, that his wife may be overcome with his parts; when the fool is welcome to both, pleaseth both, laughs with the one, and lies with the other, and all without suspicion. I tell thee, a fool that has money is the man. The wits and the we's, which is a distinct parreil of wit bound by itself, and to be sold at Wit-hall, or at the sign of the King's-head in the butchery; these wise things will make twenty jealous, ere one man a cuckold; when the family of fools will head a parish ere they are suspected.

Bawd.

Well, I see one may live and learn; and if he be but as good at it now you are his own, as he was when he was your friend's friend, (as they call it) you have got one

¹⁷ *Gredaline petticoat.*] A gredaline petticoat is probably a petticoat puckered, or crumpled, from the French word *Grediller*. See *Cotgrave*. In *Boyer's Dictionary* it is explained, *Gris de lin, sorte de coulour*.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 413

of the best hidors of such a business in the town. Lord,
how he would sister you at a play!

Wanton.

Faith, 'tis as he is used at first; if he get the bridle
in's teeth he'll ride to the devil; but if thou be'st true,
we'll make him amble ere we have done. The plot is
here, and if it thrive I'll alter the proverb, *The parson*
gets the children, to, The parson fathers them.

Bawd.

Any thing that may get rule; I love to wear the breeches.

Wanton.

So do we all, wench. Empire! 'tis all our aim; and
I'll put my ranting Roger in a cage but I'll tame him;
he loves already, which is an excellent ring in a fool's
nose, and thou shalt hear him sing —

Happy only is that family that shews
A cock that's silent, and a hen that crows.

Bawd.

Do this, I'll serve you for nothing; the impetuous
slave had wont to taunt me for beating of my husband,
and would sing that song in mockery of me.

Wanton.

In revenge of which, thou (if thou wilt be faithful)
shalt make him sing,

Happy is that family that shews
A cock that's silent, and a hen that crows.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Enter Parson, Loveall, and Faithful.

Loveall.

GO, you are a naughty man: Do you come hither to
rail against an honest gentleman? I have heard how
you fell out; you may be ashamed on't, a man of your
caot.

414 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Parson.

What ? to speak truth and perform my duty ? the world cries out you are a scabb'd sheep, and I am come to tar you, that is, give you notice how your fame suffers i'th' opinion of the world.

Loveall.

My fame, firrah ? 'tis purer than thy doctrine : get thee out of my house.

Faithful.

You uncivil fellow, do you come hither to tell my lady of her faults, as if her own Levite could not discern 'em ?

Loveall.

My own Levite ! I hope he's better bred than to tell me of my faults.

Faithful.

He finds work enough to correct his dearly-belov'd sinners.

Parson.

And the right worshipful my lady, and yourself, they mend at leisure.

Loveall.

You are a faucy fellow, firrah, to call me sinner in my own house. Get you gone with your — Madam, I hear, and (madam) I could advise, but I am loath to speak ; Take heed, the world talks ;—and thus with dark sentences put my innocence into a fright, with you know what you know, good mistress Faithful ; so do I, and the world shall know too thou hast married a whore.

Parson.

Madam, a whore ?

Faithful.

No, fir, 'tis not so well as a madam-whore ; 'tis a poor whore, a captain's cast whore.

Loveall.

Now bless me, marry a whore ! I wonder any man can endure those things : what kind of creatures are they ?

Parson.

They're like ladies, but that they are handsomer; and tho' you take a privilege to injure me, yet I would advise your woman to tie up her tongue, and not abuse my wife.

Loveall.

Fie, art thou not ashamed to call a whore wife? Lord bless us, what will not these men do when God leaves them! but for a man of your coat to cast himself away upon a whore—Come, wench, let's go and leave him! I'll swear 'tis strange, the state doth not provide to have all whores hang'd or drown'd.

Faithful.

Ay, and 'tis time they look into it; for they begin to spread so, that a man can scarce find an honest woman in a country. They say, they're voted down now: 'twas mov'd by that charitable member that got an order to have it but five miles to Croydon, for ease of the market-women.

Loveall.

Ay, ay, 'tis a blessed parliament.

[*Exeunt Loveall and Faithful.*]

Parson.

That I have play'd the fool is visible. This comes of rashness. Something I must do to set this right, or else she'll hate, and he'll laugh at me. I must not lose him and my revenge too. Something that's mischief I am resolv'd to do.

[*Exit Parson.*]

¹⁸ I'll swear, &c.] Paulo Purganti's wife has the same sentiment. She

"——thought the nation ne'er wou'd thrive,

" 'Till all the whores were burnt alive."

PRIOR.

SCENE

416 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

SCENE V.

Enter Wild and Careless.

Wild.

NOW is the Parson's wife so contemptible?

Careless.

No, but I'm so full of that resolution to dislike the sex, that I will allow none honest, none handsome. I tell thee, we must beat down the price with our selves; court none of them, but let their maidenheads and their faces lie upon their hands, till they're weary of the commodity; then they'll haunt us to find proper chapmen to deal for their ware.

Wild.

I like this, but 'twill be long a doing, and it may be ere they be forc'd to sell, our bank will be exhausted, and we shall not be able to purchase.

Careless.

Ay, but we'll keep a credit, and at three fix months, thou and the captain shall be my factors.

Wild.

You had best have a partner, else such an undertaking would break a better back than yours.

Careless.

No partners in such commodities; your factor that takes up maidenheads, 'tis upon his own account still.

Wild.

But what course will you take to purchase this trade with women?

Careless.

I am resolv'd to put on their own silence and modesty, answer Forsooth, swear nothing but God's nigs, and hold arguments of their own cold tenets, as if I believ'd there were no true love below the line; then sigh when 'tis proper, and with forc'd studies betray the enemy, who seeing my eye fix'd on her, her vanity thinks I am lost
in

in admiration, calls and shakes me ere I wake out of my design, and being collected, answer out of purpose. Love, divinest? yes, who is it that is mortal and does not? or which amongst all the senate of the gods, can gaze upon those eyes, and carry thence the power he brought? this will start her.

Wild.

Yes, and make her think thee mad.

Careless.

Why that's my design; for then I start too, and rub my eyes as if I wak'd; then sigh and strangle a yawn, till I have wrung it into tears, with which I rise as if o'ercome with grief; then kifs her hands, and let fall those witnessses of faith and love, brib'd for my design. This takes; for who would suspect such a devil as craft and youth to live together?

Wild.

But what kind of women do you think this will take?

Careless.

All kind of women: those that think themselves handsome, it being probable, conclude it real; and those that are handsome in their opinion, that small number will believe it, because it agrees with their wishes.

Wild.

And when you are gone, it may be they sigh, and their love breaks out into paper, and what then?

Careless.

What then? why then I'll laugh, and shew thee their letters, and teach the world how easy 'tis to win any woman.

Wild.

This is the way; and be sure to dislike all but her you design for: be scarce civil to any of the sex besides.

Careless.

That's my meaning: but to her that I mean my prey, all her slave; she shall be my deity, and her opinion my religion.

Wild.

And while you sad it once to one, I'll talk freer than a privileg'd fool, and swear as unreasonably as losing game-

418 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

sters, and abuse thee for thinking to reclaim a woman by thy love; call them all bowls thrown that will run where they will run, and lovers like fools run after them, crying, rub, and fly, for me; I believe none fair, none handsome, none honest, but the kind.

Careless.

We must make the captain of our plot, lest he betray us. This will gain us some revenge upon the lovers to whom I grudge the wenches, not that I believe they're worth half the cost they pay for them: and we may talk, but 'tis not our opinion can make them happier or more miserable.

Enter Jolly.

Wild.

Jolly! Will, where hast thou been? We had such sport with the parson of our town; he's marry'd this morning to Wanton.

Jolly.

Who? the captain's wench? he's in a good humour then. As you love mirth, let's find him; I have news to blow his rage with, and 'twill be mirth to us, to see him divided betwixt the several causes of his anger, and lose himself in his rage while he disputes which is the greater. Your opinion, gentlemen, Is this, or his wench, the greater loss?

Careless.

What hast thou there? pearl! they're false, I hope.

[Here he pulls out the pearl.]

Jolly.

Why do you hope so?

Careless.

Because I am thy friend, and would be loath to have thee hang'd for stealing.

Jolly.

I will not swear they are honestly come by; but I'll be sworn, there's neither force nor theft in't.

Wild.

Pr'ythee, speak out of riddles; here's none but your friends.

Jolly.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 419

Jolly.

Faith, take it. You have heard the captain brag of an old lady, which he thinks he keeps close in a box ; but I know where hangs a key can let a friend in, or so. From her, my brace of worthies, whose wits are dull'd with plenty this morning, with three good words, and four good deeds, I earn'd this toy.

Careless.

The mirth yet we will all share. I am in pain till we find him, that we may vex his wit, that he presumes so much on.

Wild.

Let's go, let's go ; I will desire him to let me see his wench. I will not understand him, if he says she's gone.

Careless.

I'll beg of him, for old acquaintance sake, to let me see his old lady.

Jolly.

Hark ! I hear his voice. —

Captain.

Which way ?

Careless.

The game plays itself. Begin with him, Ned, while we talk as if we were busy. We'll take our cue.

Wild.

When I put off my hat.

Enter Captain.

Captain.

'Sblood, I thought you had been sunk : I have been hunting you these four hours. Death, you might ha' left word where you went, and not put me to hunt like Tom Fool. 'Tis well you are at London, where you know the way home.

Wild.

Why in choler ? We have been all this while searching you. Come, this is put on to divert me from claiming your promise : I must see the wench.

Captain.

You cannot, adad : adad, you cannot.

E c 2

Wild.

Wild.

I did not think you would have refus'd such a kindness.

Careless.

What's that?

Wild.

Nothing; a toy: he refuses to shew me his wench!

Careless.

The devil he does! What! have we been thus long comrades, and had all things in common, and must we now come to have common wenches particular? I say, thou shalt see her, and lie with her too, if thou wilt.

Jolly.

What! in thy dumps, brother? Call to thy aid thy two-edg'd wit. The captain sad! 'tis prophetic: I'd as live have dreamt of pearl, or the loss of my teeth: yet, if he be musty, I'll warrant thee, Ned, I'll help thee to a bout. I know his cloak, his long cloak that hides her. I am acquainted with the parson, he shall befriend thee.

Captain.

'Tis very well, gentlemen: but none of you have seen her yet?

Wild.

Yes, but we have, by thyself, by thy anger, which is now bigger than thou. By chance we cross'd her coming from church, leading in her hand the parson, to whom she swore she was this day married.

Jolly.

And our friendships were now guiding us to find thee out, to comfort thee after the treachery of thy Levite.

Careless.

Come, bear it, like a man; there are more wenches. What hast thou 'spy'd?—

[He gives no answer, but peeps under Jolly's bat.

Wild.

His pearl, I believe.

Captain.

Gentlemen, I see you are merry, I'll leave you: I must go a little way to enquire about a business.

Wild.

H'as got a sore eye, I think.

Captain.

Captain.

I will only, ask one question, and return.

Careless.

No, faith, stay and be satisfied.

Jolly.

Do, good brother; for I believe there is no question that you now would ask, but here's an oracle can resolve you.

Captain.

Are those pearl true?

Jolly.

Yes.

Captain.

And did not you steal them?

Jolly.

No.

Careless.

Nor he did not buy them with ready money, but took them upon mortgage of himself to an old lady.

Jolly.

Dwelling at the sign of the Buck in Broad-street. Are you satisfy'd, or must I play the oracle still?

Captain.

No, no; I am satisfy'd.

Jolly.

Like jealous men that take their wives at it, are you not?

Captain.

Well, very well; 'tis visible I am abus'd on all hands. But, gentlemen, why all against me?

Careless.

To let you see your wit's mortal, and not proof against all.

Wild.

The parson hath shot it through with a jest.

Captain.

Gentlemen, which of you, faith, had a hand in that?

Jolly.

Faith, none, only a general joy to find the captain over-reach'd.

422 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Captain.

But, do you go sharers in the profit, as well as in the jest?

Jolly.

No, faith, the toy's mine own.

Captain.

They are very fine, and you may afford a good penny-worth. Will you sell them?

Jolly.

Sell them! ay; where's a chapman?

Captain.

Here; I'll purchase them.

Jolly.

Thou! no, no, I have barr'd thee, by and main; for I am resolv'd not to fight for them; that excludes thy purchase by the sword; and thy wench has prov'd such a loss, in thy last adventure of wit, that I'm afraid it will spoil thy credit that way too.

Captain.

Gentlemen, as a friend, let me have the refusal; set your price.

Wild.

He's serious.

Careless.

Leave fooling.

Jolly.

Why, if thou could'st buy them, what would'st thou do with them?

Captain.

They're very fair ones; let me see them; methinks they should match very well with these.

Jolly.

These! which?

Omnes.

Which?

Careless.

They are true.

Captain.

Yes, but not earn'd with a pair of stol'n verses, of, I was not born till now, This my first night, And so forth; nor given as a charm against lust.

Careless.

Careless.

What means all this ?

Jolly.

What ! why, 'tis truth, and it means to shame the devil. By this good day, he repeats the same words with which I gather'd these pearls.

Wild.

Why then, we have two to laugh at.

Careless.

And all friends hereafter ; let's fool all together.

Captain.

Gentlemen with the fine wits, and my very good friends, do you, or you, or he, think I'll keep you company to make you laugh, but that I draw my honey from you too ?

Careless.

Come, come, the captain's in the right.

Captain.

Yes, yes, the captain knows it, and dares tell you, your wit, your fortune, and his face, are but my plows ; and I would have my fine monsieur know, who, in spite of my counsel will be finer than his mistress, and appears before her so curiously built, she dares not play with him, for fear of spoiling him ; and to let him know the truth I speak, to his fair hands I present this letter ; but withal, give him to understand, the contents belong to me.

[He reads the letter.]

Wild.

The pearl are sent to me.

Captain.

I deny that, unless you prove you sent me ; for the letter begins, " Sir, this noble gentleman, the bearer, " whom you are pleased to make the messenger of your " love," and so forth. And now you should do well to enquire for that noble gentleman, and take an account of him how he has laid out your love ; and it may be, he'll return you pearl for it. And now, gentlemen, I dare propose a peace, at least a cessation of wit (but what is defensive) till such time as the plot which is now in my head be effected, in which you have all your shares.

E e 4

Wild.

Wild.

So she knows I have not the pearl, I am content.

Captain.

She'll quickly find that, when she sees you come not to-night according to my appointment, and hears I have fold the pearl.

Jolly.

Here then ceaseth our offensive war.

Captain.

I'll give you counsel worth two ropes of pearl.

Careless.

But the wench, how came the parson to get her?

Captain.

Faith, 'tis hard to say which labour'd most, he, or I, to make that match; but the knave did well. There it is (if you assist) I mean to lay the scene of your mirth to-night, for I am not yet fully reveng'd upon the rogue; for that I know him miserable is nothing, till he believe so too. Wanton and I have laid the plot.

Jolly.

Do you hold correspondence?

Captain.

Correspondence! I tell thee, the plots we laid to draw him on, would make a comedy.

Enter a Servant.

Servant.

Sir, the ladies stay dinner.

Jolly.

And as we go I'll tell you all the story, and after dinner be free from all engagements, as we promised thee; and follow but your directions, I'll warrant you mirth and a pretty wench.

Omnes.

Agreed, any thing that breeds mirth is welcome.

Jolly.

Not a word at the widow's; let them go on quietly, and steal their wedding too.

Captain.

I heard a bird sing, as if it were concluded amongst the couples.

Wild.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 425

Wild.

They have been long about it; my cuz is a girl deserves more haste to her bed; he has arriv'd there by carriers journies.

Careless.

But that I hate wooing, by this good day, I like your aunt so well, and her humour, she should scarce be thrown away upon pale-face, that has sigh'd her into a wedding-ring, and will but double her jointure.

Captain.

Why, ay, thus it should be: pray let us make them the feat of the war all dinner, and continue united and true among ourselves, then we may defy all foreign danger.

Jolly.

And with full bowls let us crown this peace, and sing,
Wit without war, no mirth doth bring. [Exeunt.

SCENE VI.

Enter Parson and Wanton.

Wanton.

WAS she deaf to your report?

Parson.

Yes, yes.

[*The Parson walks troubled up and down.*

Wanton.

And Ugly, her Abigail, she had her say too?

Parson.

Yes, yes.

Wanton.

And do you walk here biting your nails? do you think I'll be satisfy'd with such a way of righting me?

Parson.

What would't have me do?

Wanton.

Have you no gall? be abus'd and laugh'd at by a dull captain, that a strict muster would turn fool! you had
wit,

wit, and could rail, when I offended you ; and none so sudden, none so terrible, none so sure in his revenge, when I displease you.

Parson.

Something I'll do.

Wanton.

Do it then, or I shall curse that e'er I saw you. Death ! let the sign of my lady, an out-of-fashion whore, that has pay'd for sin, ever since yellow starch¹⁹ and wheel fardingales were cry'd down, let her abuse me, and say nothing ! if this passes——

Parson.

As Christ blefs me, but I did (sweet heart :) and if it were not church livings are mortal, and they are always hitting me in the teeth with a man of your coat, she should find I am no church-man within, nor Mr. Parson, but in my coat. Come to dinner, and after dinner I'll do something.

Wanton.

I shall do something will vex somebody.

Enter Bawd.

Bawd.

Will you please to come to dinner ? the company stays.

Parson.

Come, let's go in.

Wanton.

No, I must walk a little to digest this breakfast, the guests else will wonder to see I am troubled.

Parson.

Come, let this day pass in mirth, spight of mischief, for luck's sake. [Exit Parson.]

Wanton.

I'll follow you, and do what I can to be merry.

Bawd.

Why, he stands already.

¹⁹ *Yellow starch.*] See note to Albumazar, A. 2. S. 1. vol. 6.

Wanton.

Wanton.

Peace, let me alone, I'll make him jostle like the miller's mare, and stand like the dun cow, till thou may'st milk him.

Bawd.

Pray break him of his miserableness ; it is one of the chief exceptions I have against him. He reared a puppy once, till it was ten days old, with three hap'worth of milk, and then with his own dagger slew it, and made me dress it : blest myself to see him eat it, and he bid me beg the litter, and swore it was sweeter and wholsomer than sucking rabbits, or London pigs, which he call'd Belmen's issue. [*Parson calls within. Why, sweet heart !*

Wanton.

Hark ! he calls me. We must humour him a little, he'll rebel else.

S C E N E VII.

Enter (at the windows) the Widow and Master Careless, Mistress Pleasant and Master Wild, Captain, Master Sad, Constant, Jolly, Secret : a table and knives ready for oysters.

Widow.

You're welcome all, but especially Master Jolly ; no reply, with I thank your ladyship.

Pleasant.

I beseech you, sir, let us never be better acquainted.

[*She speaks to Mr. Jolly.*

Jolly.

I shall endeavour, lady, and fail in nothing that is in my power to disoblige you ; for there is none more ambitious of your ill opinion than I.

Pleasant.

I rejoice at it ; for the less love, the better welcome still.

Widow.

428 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Widow.

And as ever you had an ounce of love for the widow, be not friends among yourselves.

Wild.

Aunt, though we were at strife when we were alone, yet now we unite like a politick state against the common enemy.

Pleasant.

The common enemy! what is that?

Widow.

Women, and lovers in general.

Widow.

Nay, then we have a party, niece; claim quickly, now is the time, according to the proverb; keep a thing seven years, and then if thou hast no use on't, throw't away.

Pleasant.

Agreed, let's challenge our servants; by the love they have profess'd, they cannot in honour refuse to join with us; and see where they come!—

Enter Sad and Constant, and meet Secret; she whispers this to Sad.

Secret.

Sir, 'tis done.

Sad.

Be secret and grave, I'll warrant our design will take as we can wish.

Constant.

Sweet Mistress Pleasant!

Widow.

Servant, Sad.

Sad.

Madam.

Widow.

We are threatened to have a war wag'd against us; will you not second us?

Sad.

With these youths we'll do enough, madam.

Widow.

I'll swear my servant gave hit for hit this morning, as if he had been a master in the noble science of wit.

Pleasant.

Mine laid about him with spik and span new arguments, not like the same man, his old sayings and precedents laid by.

Widow.

Thus arm'd, then, we'll stand and defy them.

Wild.

Where's your points? sure, aunt, this should be your wedding-day, for you have taken the man for better for worse.

Widow.

No, nephew, this will not prove the day that we shall either give or take a ring.

Careless.

Hang me, if I know you can go back again with your honour.

Wild.

Or in justice refuse him liberty, that has serv'd out his time; either marry him or provide for him, for he is maim'd in your service.

Widow.

Why, servant Sad, you'll arm? my nephew has thrown the first dart at you.

Captain.

Hast hit, hast hit?

Wild.

No, captain; 'twas too wide.

Captain.

Too wide! marry, he's an ill marks-man that shoots wider than a widow.

Jolly.

We are both in one hole, captain; but I was loth to venture my opinion, lest her ladyship should think I was angry; for I have a good mind to fall upon the widow.

Pleasant.

You're a constant man, Master Jolly; you have been in that mind this twelvemonths day.

Constant.

430 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Constant.

You are in the right, madam ; she has it to shew under his hand, but she will not come in the list with him again ; she threw him the last year.

Widow.

Come, shall we eat oysters ? Who's there ? Call for some wine, Master Jolly ; you are not warm yet. Pray be free, you are at home.

Jolly.

Your ladyship is merry.

Widow.

You do not take it ill, to have me assure you, you are at home here ?

Wild.

Such another invitation (though in jest) will take away Master Sad's stomach.

[*Oysters not brought in yet.*]

Sad.

No, faith, Ned, though she should take him ; it will not take away my stomach ; my love is so fix'd, I may wish my wishes, but she shall never want them to wait upon hers.

Pleasant.

A traytor, bind him, has pull'd down a side. Profess your love thus publick ?

Jolly.

Ay, by my faith, continue Master Sad, give it out, you love, and call it a new love, a love never seen before ; we'll all come to it as your friends.

Sad.

Gentlemen, still I love : and if she to whom I thus sacrifice will not reward it, yet the worst malice can say, is, I was unfortunate ; and misfortune, not falsehood, made me so.

Jolly.

In what chapter shall we find this written, and what verse ? you should preach with a method, Master Sad.

Widow.

Gentlemen, if ever he spoke so much dangerous sense before (either of love or reason) hang me.

Sad.

Sad.

Madam, my love is no news where you are ; know, your scorn has made it publick ; and though it could gain no return from you, yet others have esteem'd me for the faith and constancy I have pay'd here.

Pleasant.

Did not I foretell you of his love ? I foresaw this danger : shall I never live to see wi^th and love dwell together ?

Captain.

I am but a poor soldier, and yet never reach'd to the honour of being a lover ; yet from my own observations, Master Sad, take a truth ; 'Tis a folly to believe any woman loves a man for being constant to another ; they dissemble their hearts only, and hate a man in love worse than a wench.

Jolly.

And they have reason ; for if they have the grace to be kind, he that loves the sex may be theirs.

Careless.

When your constant lover, if a woman have a mind to him, and be blest with so much grace to discover it ; he, out of the noble mistake of honour, hates her for it, and tells it perchance, and preaches reason to her passion, and cries, Miserable beauty, to be so unfortunate as to inhabit in so much frailty !

Captain.

This counsel makes her hate him more than she lov'd before. These are troubles those that love are subject to ; while we look on and laugh, to see both thus slav'd while we are free.

Careless.

My prayers still shall be, Lord deliver me from love.

Captain.

'Tis plague, pestilence, famine, sword, and sometimes sudden death.

Sad.

Yet I love, I must love, I will love, and I do love.

Captain.

In the present tense.

Widow.

Widow.

No more of this argument, for love's fake.

Captain.

By any means, madam, give him leave to love ; and you are resolv'd to walk tied up in your own arms, with your love as visible in your face, as your mistress's colours in your hat ; that any porter at Charing-cross may take you like a letter at the carrier's, and having read the superscription, deliver Master Sad to the fair hands of mistress or my lady such a one, lying at the sign of the hard heart.

Pleasant.

And she, if she has wit (as I believe she hath) will scarce pay the post for the packet.

Widow.

Treason ! how now, niece, join with the enemy ?

*[They give the Captain wine.]**Captain.*

A health, Ned, what shall I call it ?

Careless.

To Master Sad ; he needs it that avows himself a lover.

Sad.

Gentlemen, you have the advantage, the time, the place, the company ; but we may meet when your wits shall not have such advantage as my love.

Pleasant.

No more of love, I am so sick on't.

Constant.

By your pardon, mistress, I must not leave love thus unguarded ; I vow myself his follower.

Jolly.

Much good may love do him. Give me a glass of wine here. Will, let them keep company with the blind boy, give us his mother, and let them preach again : Hear that will, he has good luck, persuades me 'tis an ugly sin to lie with a handsome woman.

Captain.

A pox upon my nurse, she frightened me so when I was young, with stories of the devil, I was almost fourteen ere I could

I could prevail with reasons to unbind my reason; it was so flav'd to faith and conscience; she made me believe wine was an evil spirit, and fornication like the whore of Babylon, a fine face, but a dragon under her petty-coats; and that made me have a mind to peep under all I met since.

Widow.

Fie, fie, for shame, do not talk so; are you not ashamed to glory in sin, as if variety of women were none?

Jolly.

Madam, we do not glory in fornication; and yet I thank God, I cannot live without a woman.

Captain.

Why, does your ladyship think it a sin to lie with variety of handsome women? if it be, would I were the wicked'st man in the company.

Pleasant.

You have been mark'd for an indifferent sinner that way, captain.

Captain.

Who I? no faith, I was a fool; but and I were to begin again, I would not do as I have done. I kept one; but if ever I keep another, hang me; nor would I advise any friend of mine to do it.

Jolly.

Why, I am sure 'tis a provident and safe way; a man may always be provided and found.

Pleasant.

Fie upon this discourse.

Captain.

Those considerations betray'd me: a pox, it is a dull sin to travel, like a carrier's horse, always one road.

Widow.

Fie, captain, repent for shame, and marry.

Captain.

Your ladyship would have said, marry, and repent; no, though it be not the greatest pleasure, yet it is better than marrying; for when I am weary of her, my unconstancy is termed virtue, and I shall be said to turn to grace. Beware of women for better for worse; for

our wicked nature, when her sport is lawful, cloy's
straight: therefore, rather than marry, keep a wench.

Jolly.

Faith, he is in the right; for 'tis the same thing in
number and kind; and then the sport is quickened, and
made poignant with sin.

Captain.

Yet 'tis a fault, faith; and I'll persuade all my friends
from it; especially here where any innovation is dan-
gerous. 'Twas the newness of the sin that made me suf-
fer in the opinion of my friends; and I was condemn'd
by all sorts of people; not that I sinn'd, but that I sinn'd
no more.

Careless.

Why ay, hadst thou been wicked in fashion, and privily
lain with every body, their guilt would have made them
protect thee: so that to be more wicked is to be inno-
cent, at least safe. A wicked world, Lord help us!

Captain.

But being particular to her, and not in love, nor subject
to it; taking an antidote ev'ry morning, before I venture
into those infectious places where love and beauty dwell;
this enraged the maiden beauties of the time, who thought
it a prejudice to their beauties to see me careless, and se-
curely pass by their conquering eyes; my name being
found amongst none of those that deck'd their triumphs.
But from this, 'tis easy to be safe; for their pride will not
let them love, nor my leisure me. Then the old ladies
that pay for their pleasures: they, upon the news, beheld
me with their natural frowns, despairing when their mo-
ney could not prevail; and hated me when they heard that
I for my pleasure would pay as large as they.

Jolly.

Gentlemen, take warning: a fee from every man; for
by this day, there's strange counsel in this confession.

Wild.

Captain, you forget to pledge Mr. Careless! Here, will
you not drink a cup of wine? Who's there? Bring the
oysters.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 435

Captain.

Yes, madam, if you please.

Wild.

Proceed, captain.

Pleasant.

Fie, Mr. Wild, are you not ashamed to encourage him to this filthy discourse?

Captain.

A glass of wine then, and I'll drink to all the new-married wives that grieve to think at what rate their fathers purchase a little husband. These, when they lie thirsting for the thing they paid so dear for—

Enter a Servant with oysters.

Careless.

These, methinks, should be thy friends, and point thee out as a man for them.

Captain.

Yes, till the faithful nurse cries; Alas, madam, he keeps such a one, he has enough at home. Then she swells with envy and rage against us both; calls my mistress ugly, common, unsafe; and me, a weak secure fool.

Jolly.

These are strange truths, madam.

Widow.

Ay, ay; but these oysters are a better jest.

Captain.

But she's abus'd that will let such reason tame her desire, and a fool in love's school; else she would not be ignorant that variety is such a friend to love, that he which rises a suak coward from the lady's bed, would find new fires at her maid's: nor ever yet did the man want fire, if the woman would bring the fuel.

Pleasant.

For God's sake, leave this discourse.

Widow.

The captain has a mind we should eat no oysters.

F f 2

Wild.

436 THE PARSON'S WEDDING:

Wild.

Aunt, we came to be merry, and we will be merry, and you shall stay it out; proceed, captain.

Widow.

Fie, captain, I am ashamed to hear you talk thus: marry, and then you will have a better opinion of women.

Captain.

Marry! yes, this knowledge will invite me: it is a good encouragement, is it not, think you? What is your opinion? Were not these marriages made in heaven! By this good day, all the world is mad, and makes haste to be fool'd, but we four: and I hope, there's none of us believes there has any marriages been made in heaven since Adam.

Jelly.

By my faith, 'tis thought the devil gave the ring there too.

Widow.

Nephew, I'll swear, I'll be gone.

Captain.

Hold her, Ned, [*He points at Sad.*] she goes not yet; there's a fourth kind of women that concerns her more than all the rest, *ecce signum*—She is one of those, who cloath'd in purple, triumph over their dead husbands; these will be catch'd at first sight, and at first sight must be caught. 'Tis a bird that must be shot flying, for they never sit. If a man delay, they cool, and fall into considerations of jointure, and friends opinion; in which time, if she hears thou keep'st a wench, thou hadst better be a beggar in her opinion; for then her pride, it may be, would betray her to the vanity of setting up a proper man (as they call it;) but for a wench, no argument prevails with your widow; for she believes they have spent too much that way, to be able to pay her due benevolence.

Widow.

As I live, I'll be gone, if you speak one word more of this uncivil subject.

Jelly.

Captain, let me kiss thy cheek, for that widow. You understand

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 437

understand this, widow? I say no more. Here, captain, here's to thee. As it goes down, a pox of care.

Widow.

Jesus! Mr. Jolly, have you no observations of the court, that are so affected with this of the town?

Constant.

Faith, they say, there's good sport there sometimes.

Pleasant.

Mr. Jolly is afraid to let us partake of his knowledge.

Jolly.

No, faith, madam.

Captain.

By this drink, if he stay till I have eaten a few more, I'll describe it.

Jolly.

What should I say? 'Tis certain the court is the bravest place in the kingdom for sport, if it were well look'd to, and the game preserv'd fair; but as 'tis, a man may sooner make a set in the Strand: and it will never be better whilst your divine lovers inhabit there.

Careless.

Let the king make me master of the game.

Captain.

And admit us laity-lovers.

Jolly.

I would he would; for as 'tis, there's no hopes amongst the ladies: besides, 'tis such an example to see a king and queen good husband and wife, that to be kind will grow out of fashion.

Captain.

Nay that's not all; for the women grow malicious, because they are not courted: nay, they breed all the last mischiefs, and call'd the king's chastity a neglect of them.

Jolly.

Thou art in the right: an Edward or a Harry, with seven queens in buckram, that haught among the men, and stroak'd the women, are the monarchs they wish to bow to: they love no tame princes, but lions in the forest!

Captain.

Why, and those were properly call'd the fathers of their people, that were indeed akin to their nobility: now they wear out their youth and beauty, without hope of a monumental ballad, or trophy of a libel that shall hereafter point at such a lord, and cry, that is the royal son of such a one.

Jolly.

And these were the ways that made them powerful at home: for the city is a kind of tame beast; you may lead her by the horns any whither, if you but tickle them in the ear sometimes. Queen Bess, of famous memory, had the trick on't: and I have heard them say, in eighty-eight, ere I was born, as well as I can remember, she rode to Tilbury on that bonny beast, the mayor.

Captain.

I would I might compel him, I'd so reform the court.

Careless.

Never too soon; for now, when a stranger comes in, and spies a covey of beauties would make a falconer unhood, before he can draw his leash he is warn'd that's a mark'd partridge; and that, and every he, has by their example a particular she.

Wild.

By this light, the six fair maids stand like the working-days in the almanack; one with A scored upon her breast, that is as much as to say, I belong to such a lord; the next with B, for an elder brother; C, for such a knight; D, possess'd with melancholy, and at her breast you may knock an hour ere you get an answer, and then she'll tell you, there's no lodging there; she has a constant fellow courtier that has taken up all her heart to his own use: in short, all are dispos'd of but the good mother; and she comes in like the sabbath at the week's end; and I warrant her to make any one rest that comes at her.

Careless.

Ay, marry, if she were like the Jews sabbath, it were somewhat; but this looks like a broken commandment, that has had more work done upon her, than all the week besides.

Captain.

Captain.

And what think you, is not this finely carried? you that are about the king, counsel him, if he will have his sport fair, he must let the game be free, as it has been in former ages; then a stranger that has wit, good means, and handsome cloaths, no sooner enters the privy chamber, and beats about with three graceful legs²⁰, but he springs a mistress that danc'd as well as he, sung better, as free as fair; those at first sight could speak, for wit is always acquainted: these fools must be akin ere they can speak; and now friends make the bargain, and they go to bed ere they know why.

Jolly.

Faith, he's in the right; you shall have a buzzard now hover and beat after a pretty wench, till she is so weary of him she's forc'd to take her bed for covert, and find less danger in being truss'd than in flying.

Captain.

And what becomes of all this pudder? after he has made them sport for one night, to see him touze the quarry, he carries her into the country, and there they two fly at one another till they are weary.

Careless.

And all this mischief comes of love and constancy; we shall never see better days till there be an act of parliament against it, enjoining husbands not to till their wives, but change and lay them fallow.

Jolly.

A pox, the women will never consent to it; they'll be kill'd to death first.

Wild.

Gentlemen, you are very bold with the sex.

Captain.

Faith, madam, it is our care of them; why you see they are married at fourteen, yield a crop and a half, and then die; 'tis merely their love that destroys 'em; for if

²⁰ legs,] bows. Dekker's *Wonderful Years* 1603. "Janus (that beareth two faces under one hood) made a very mannerly *lowe legge*, &c."

Ibid.

"He calls forth one by one, to note their graces;

"Whilst they make legs, he copies out their faces."

440 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

they get a good husband, the poor things yield their very hearts.

Pleasant.

And do you blame their loves, gentlemen ?

Jolly.

No, not their love, but their discretion ; let them love, and do, a God's name ; but let them do with discretion,

Wild.

But how will you amend this ?

Jolly.

Instead of two beds and a physician, I'd have the state prescribe two wives and a mistress.

Wild.

Ho ! it will never be granted ; the state is made up of old men, and they find work enough with one.

Jolly.

We will petition the lower house, there are young men, and (if it were but to be factious) would pass it, if they thought the upper house would cross it ; besides, they ought to do it. Death ! they provide against cutting down old trees, and preserving highways and post-horses, and let pretty wenches run to decay.

Careless.

Why may it not come within the statute of depopulation ? As I live, the state ought to take care of those pretty creatures : be you judge, madam, is't not a sad sight to see a rich young beauty, with all her innocence and blossoms on, subject to some rough rude fellow, that ploughs her, and esteems and uses her as a chattel, till she is so lean, a man may find as good grass upon the common, where it may be she'll fit coughing with sunk eyes, so weak, that a boy (with a dog) that can but whistle, may keep a score of them ?

Widow.

You are strangely charitable to our sex on a sudden.

Captain.

I know not what they are ; but, for my part, I'll be a traitor ere I'll look on, and see beauty go thus to wreck : it is enough custom has made us suffer them to be inclos'd ; I am sure they were created common, and for
the

the use of man, and not intended to be subject to jealousy and choler, or to be bought or sold, or let for term of lives or years, as they are now, or else sold at out-crys²¹; oh yes! who'll give most, take her.

Widow.

Why, do not some of you excellent men marry, and mend all these errors by your good example?

Jolly.

Because we want fortunes to buy rich wives, or keep poor ones, and be loath to get beggars, or whores, as well as I love 'em.

Pleasant.

Why, are all their children so that have no fortune, think you?

Jolly.

No, not all: I have heard of²² Whittington and his cat, and others, that have made fortunes by strange means; but I scarce believe my son would rise from hope, a half-penny, and a lamb's-skin; and the wenches, commonly having more wit and beauty than money, foreseeing small portions, grow fad, and read romances, till their wit spy some unfortunate merit like their own, without money too, and they two sigh after one another till they grow mysterious in colours, and become a proverb for their constancy; and when their love has worn out the cause,

²¹ — or else sold at out-crys] Out-cry was the ancient term for an auction. As in *Massinger's City Madam*, A. 1. S. 3.

"The goods of this poor man sold at an out-cry,

"His wife turn'd out of doors, his children forc'd

"To beg their bread."

Middleton's Chast Mayd in Chescop-fide, p. 41.

"I'll sell all at an out-cry."

Ben Jonson's Catiline A. 2. S. 3.

"Their houses, and fine gardens, given away,

"And all their goods, under the spear at out-cry."

Upon which last passage Mr. Whalley observes, that "the Roman way of selling things by auction, was setting up a spear; and hence the phrase *sub hasta vendere*."

²² I have heard of Whittington and his cat.] See Evans's Collection of Old Ballads, vol. 1. p. 292.

marry,

442 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

marry, in the end, a new couple ; then, grown ashamed of the knowledge they so long hunted, at length part by consent, and vanish into Abigail and governor.

Widow.

Well, gentlemen, excuse me for this one time ; and if ever I invite you to dinner again, punish me with such another discourse : in the mean time let's go in and dine, meat stays for us. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter all from dinner.

Captain.

FAITH, madam, we were resolv'd to be merry ; we have not met these three years till to-day, and at the Bear we meant to have din'd ; and since your ladyship would have our company, you must pardon our humour. Here, Mr. Sad, here's the widow's health to you.

Widow.

Nephew, how do you dispose of yourself this afternoon ?

Wild.

We have a design we must pursue, which will rid you of all this troublesome company ; and we'll make no excuse, because you peeped into our privacies to-day.

Careless.

Your humble servant, ladies ; gentlemen, we'll leave you to pursue your fortunes. [*Exit Careless.*]

Jolly.

Farewell, widow : may'st thou live unmarried till thou run'st away with thyself. [*Exit Jolly.*]

Captain.

No, no, when that day comes, command the humblest of your servants. [*Exit Captain.*]

Wild.

Farewell, aunt ; sweet mistress Pleasant, I wish you good fortune. [*Exit Wild.*]

Widow.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 419

Widow.

Farewell, farewell, gentlemen; niece, now if we could be rid of these troublesome lovers too, we would go see a play! *[Aside.]*

Pleasant.

Rid of them! why, they are but now in season; as I live, I would do as little to give mine content as any she in town, and yet I do not grudge him the happiness of carrying me to a play.

Widow.

Ay, but the world will talk, because they pretend; and then we shall be sure to meet my nephew there, and his wild company, and they will laugh to see us together.

Pleasant.

Who will you have, Tim the butler, or Formal your gentleman-usher? I would take Philip the foreman of the shop as soon.

Widow.

Let's mask ourselves, and take Secret, and go alone by water,

Pleasant.

Yes, and follow her like one of my aunts of the suburbs; it is a good way to know what you may yield in a market; for I'll undertake, there are those shall bid for you before the play will be done.

Secret.

As I live, madam, Mrs. Pleasant is in the right; I had such a kindness offer'd me once, and I came to a price with him in knavery; and hang me, if the rogue was not putting the earnest of his affection into my hand.

Widow.

Let's go to the glass-house then.

Pleasant.

I'll go to a play with my servant, and so shall you; hang opinion; and we'll go to the glass-house afterwards; it is too hot to sup early.

Secret.

Pray, madam, go; they say 'tis a fine play, and a knight writ it,

Pleasant.

444 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Pleasant.

Pray let Secret prevail, I'll propose it to the lovers ; in the mean time go you, and bid the coachman make ready the coach.

[Secret whispers Sad, 'twill take.

Secret.

Alas, madam ! he's sick, poor fellow, and gone to bed ; he could not wait at dinner.

Widow.

Sick ?

Pleasant.

Why, see how all things work for the young men, either their coach, or a foot !—Mr. Constant, what think you of seeing a play this afternoon ? is it not too hot to venture, this infectious time ?

Constant.

Fie, madam, there's no danger ; the bill decreas'd twenty last week.

Sad.

I swear, they say, 'tis a very good play to-day.

Widow.

Shall we go, niece ?

Pleasant.

Faith 'tis hot, and there's no body but we.

Sad.

Do's that hinder ? pray madam, grudge us not the favour of venturing yourself in our company.

Widow.

Come, leave this ceremony. I'll go in, and put on my mask ; Secret shall bring yours.

Pleasant.

No, I'll go, and put it on within.

[Exeunt omnes.

S C E N E

SCENE II.

Enter Wild, Careless, Captain, and Jolly.

Careless.

BY this day, you have nettled the widow.

Wild.

The Captain neglected his dinner for his mirth, as if he had forgot to eat.

Jolly.

When did he oversee his drinking so?

Captain.

Gentlemen, still it is my fortune to make your worships merry.

Wild.

As I live, Captain, I subscribe, and am content to hold my wit as a tenant to thee; and to-night I'll invite you to supper, where it shall not be lawful to speak till thou hast victual'd thy man of war.

Captain.

Shall's be merry? what shall we have?

Wild.

Half a score dishes of meat, choose them yourself.

Captain.

Provide me then the chines fry'd, and the salmon cal-ver'd, a carp, and black sauce, red-deer in the blood, and an assembly of woodcocks, and jack-snipes, so fat you would think they had their winding-sheets on; and upon these, as their pages, let me have wait your Suffex wheat-ear, with a feather in his cap; over all which let our countryman, general Chine of beef, command: I hate your French pottage, that looks as the cook-maid had more hand in it than the cook.

Wild.

I'll promise you all this.

Careless.

And let me alone to cook the fish.

Captain.

You cook it! no, no, I left an honest fellow in town,
when

46 THE PARSON'S WDDING.

when I went into Italy, signior Ricardo Ligonés, one of the ancient house of the Armenian ambassadours; if he be alive, he shall be our cook.

Wild.

Is he excellent at it?

Captain.

Excellent! You shall try, you shall try; why, I tell you, I saw him once dress a shooing-horn, and a joyner's apron, that the company left pheasant for it.

Wild.

A shooing-horn?

Captain.

Yes, a shooing-horn; marry, there was garlick in the sauce,

Wild.

Is this all you would have?

Captain.

This, and a bird of paradise, to entertain the rest of the night, and let me alone to cook her.

Wild.

A bird of paradise! what's that?

Captain.

A girl of fifteen, smooth as fatten, white as her Sunday apron; plump, and of the first down: I'll take her with her guts in her belly, and warm her with a country-dance or two, then pluck her, and lay her dry betwixt a couple of sheets; there pour into her so much oil of wit as will make her turn to a man, and stick into her heart three corns of whole love, to make her taste of what she is doing; then having strewed a man all over her, shut the door, and leave us, we'll work ourselves into such a sauce as you can never surfeit on, so poignant, and yet no haut goût; take heed of a haut goût, your onion and woman make the worst sauce; this shook together by an English cook (for your French seasoning spoils many a woman) and there's a dish for a king.

Wild.

For the first part, I'll undertake.

Captain.

But this for supper? Captain, no more of this now;
this

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 447

this afternoon, as you are true to the petticoat, observe your instructions, and meet at Ned's house in the evening.

Omnes.

We will not fail.

Captain.

I must write to Wanton, to know how things stand at home, and to acquaint her how we have thrived with the old lady to-day.

Wild.

Whither will you go to write?

Captain.

To thy house, 'tis hard by, there's the Fleece.

Jolly.

Do, and in the mean time I'll go home and dispatch a little business, and meet you.

Wild.

Make haste then.

Jolly.

Where shall I meet you?

Wild.

Whither shall we go till it be time to attend the design?

Careless.

Let's go to court for an hour.

Jolly.

Do, I'll meet you at the queen's side.

Wild.

No, pr'ythee, we are the Monsieurs new come over; and if we go fine they will laugh at us, and think we believe ourselves so; if not, then they will abuse our cloaths, and swear we went into France only to have our cloaks cut shorter.

Careless.

Will you go see a play?

Captain.

Do, and thither I'll come to you, if it be none of our gentlemen poets, that excuse their writings with a prologue that professes they are no scholars.

Jolly.

On my word this is held the best penn'd of the time, and he has writ a very good play; by this day, it was extremely applauded.

Captain.

448 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Captain.

Does he write plays by the day? indeed a man would ha' judg'd him a labouring poet.

Jolly.

A labouring poet! by this hand, he's a knight; upon my recommendation venture to see it; hang me if you be not extreemly well satisfied.

Careless.

A knight and write plays! it may be, but 'tis strange to us; so they say there are other gentlemen poets without land or latin; this was not ordinary; pry'thee when was he knighted?

Jolly.

In the North, the last great knighting, when 'twas God's great mercy we were not all knights.

Wild.

I'll swear they say, there are poets that have more men in liveries, than books in their studies.

Captain.

And what think you, gentlemen, are not these things to start a man; I believe, 'tis the first time you have found them lie at the sign of the page, foot-men, and gilded coaches; they were wont to lodge at the thin cloak, they and their muses made up the family; and thence sent scenes to their patrons, like boys in at windows, and one would return with a doublet, another with a pair of breeches, a third with a little ready money; which, together with their credit with a company, in three terms you rarely saw a poet repaired.

Jolly.

This truth no body denies.

Wild.

Pry'thee let us resolve what we shall do, lest we meet with some of them: for it seems they swarm, and I fear nothing like a dedication, though it be but of himself; for I must hear him say more than either I deserve or he believes; I hate that in a poet, they must be dull, or all upon all subjects; so that they can oblige none but their muse.

Jolly.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 449

Jolly.

I perceive by this you will not see the play ; what think you of going to Sim's, to bowls, till I come ?

Careless.

Yes, if you will go to see that comedy ; but there is no reason we should pay for our coming in, and act too ; like some whose interest in the timber robs them of their reason ; and they run as if they had stol'n a bias.

Wild.

Resolve what you will do, I am contented.

Careless.

Let's go walk in Spring-garden.

Wild.

I'll do it for company ; but I had as live be rid in the horse-market as walk in that fool's fair, where neither wit nor money is, nor sure to take up a wench. There's none but honest women.

Captain.

A pox on't, what should we do there ? Let's go and cross the field to Pike's ; her kitchen is cool winter and summer

Careless.

I like that motion well ; but we have no time, and I hate to do that business by half. After supper, if you will, we'll go and make a night on't.

Captain.

Well, I must go write, therefore resolve of somewhat. Shall I propose an indifferent place where 'tis probable we shall all meet ?

Omnes.

Yes.

Captain.

Go you before to the Devil, and I'll make haste after.

Careless.

Agreed. We shall be sure of good wine there, and in Fresco ; for he is never without patent snow.

Wild.

Patent snow ! what doth that project hold ?

VOL. XI.

G g

Jolly.

450 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Jolly.

Yes, faith; and now there's a commission appointed for toasts against the next winter.

Wild.

Marry, they are wise, and foresaw the parliament, and were resolv'd their monopolies should be no grievance to the people.

Captain.

Farewell! You will be sure to meet?

Omnes.

Yes, yes.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE III.

Enter Wanton and her Maid, with her lap full of things.

Wanton.

BID them ply him close, and flatter him, and rail upon the old lady and the captain; and, do you hear, give him some hints to begin the story of his life. Do it handsomely, and you shall see the sack will clip his tongue.

Maid.

I warrant you, I'll fit him.

Wanton.

When he is in his discourse, leave him, and come down into the parlour, and steal away his box with the false rings that stands by his bed-side. I have all his little plate here already.

Maid.

Make you haste: I'll warrant you, I'll dress him.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 431

SCENE IV.

Enter the Captain with a letter in his hand, and his Boy to him with a candle : is going to write the superscription.

Boy.

SIR, the lady Loveall pass'd by even now.

Captain.

The lady Loveall ! Which way went she ?

Boy.

To the rich lady the widow, where your worship dined.

Captain.

'Tis no matter. Here, carry this letter; and bring an answer to the Devil quickly; and tell her we'll stay there till the time be fit for the design. *[Exit.*

SCENE V.

Enter Careless, Wild, and a Drawer, at the Devil.

Careless.

JACK, how goes the world ? Bring us some bottles of the best wine.

Drawer.

You shall, sir. Your worship is welcome into England.

Careless.

Why, look you; who says a drawer can say nothing but anon, anon, sir; Score a quart of sack in the half-moon ?

Drawer.

Your worship is merry : but I'll fetch you that, sir, shall speak Greek, and make your worship prophesy. You drank none such in your journey. *[Gives him an angel.*

G g 2

Wild.

452 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Wild.

Do it then, and make a hole in this angel thou may'st creep through—Who is't that peeps, a fiddler? Bring him by the ears.

Enter the Taylor that peeps.

Taylor.

A taylor, an't like your worship.

Careless.

A taylor! Hast thou a stout faith?

Taylor.

I have had, an't like your worship; but now I am in despair.

Careless.

Why then, thou art damn'd. Go, go home, and throw thyself into thine own hell; it is the next way to the other.

Taylor.

I hope your worship is not displeas'd.

Careless.

What do'st do here? A taylor without faith! Do'st come to take measure of ours?

Taylor.

No; I come to speak with one Master Jolly, a courtier; a very fine-spoken gentleman, and a just compter, but one of the worst paymasters in the world.

Wild.

As thou lov'st me, let's keep him here till he comes, and make him valiant with sack, that he may urge him till he beats him. We shall have the sport, and be reveng'd upon the rogue for dunning a gentleman in a tavern.

[Aside.]

Careless.

I'll charge him. Here drink, poor fellow, and stay in the next room till he comes.

Taylor.

I thank your worship, but I am fasting; and if it please your worship to call for a dozen of manchets, that I may eat.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 453

eat a crust first, then I'll make bold with a glass of your sack.

Wild.

Here, here, drink. In the mean time, fetch him some bread.

Taylor.

Will your worship have me drink all this vessel of sack?

Careless.

Yes, yes, off with't, 'twill do you no harm.

[The taylor drinks.]

Wild.

Why do you not take some order with that Jolly, to make him pay thee?

Taylor.

I have petition'd him often, but can do no good.

Careless.

A pox upon him; petition him! his heart is hardened to ill: threaten to arrest him; nothing but a serjeant can touch his conscience!

Taylor.

Truly, gentlemen, I have reason to be angry; for he uses me ill, when I ask him for my money.

[Jolly speaks within.]

Jolly.

Where is Master Wild and Master Careless?

Taylor.

I hear his voice.

Jolly.

Let the coach stay. How now, who would he speak with?

Enter Jolly:

Wild.

Do not you know?

Jolly.

Yes, and be you judge if the rogue does not suffer deservedly. I have bid him any time this twelvemonth but send his wife, I'll pay her; and the rogue replies, Nobody shall lie with his wife but himself,

G g 3

Careless.

454 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Careless.

Nay, if you be such a one.

Taylor.

No more they shall not. I am but a poor man.

Jolly.

By this hand, he's drunk.

Taylor.

Nay then, I arrest you in mine own name, at his majesty's suit.

Wild.

As I live, thou shalt not beat him.

Jolly.

Beat him ! I'll kiss him ; I'll pay him, and carry him about with me, and be at the charge of sack to keep him in the humour. *[He bugs the quart-pot.]*

Taylor.

Help, rescue ! I'll have his body : no bail shall serve.

Enter Drawer.

Drawer.

Sir, yonder is a gentleman would speak with you ; I do not like his followers.

Jolly.

What are they ? bailiffs ?

Drawer.

Little better.

Jolly.

Send him up alone, and stand you ready at the stairs feet.

Careless.

How can that be ?

Jolly.

It is the scrivener at the corner. Pick a quarrel with him for coming into our company. The drawers will be

²³ *How can that be ?* i. e. *Who* can that be ? In this manner the word *who* is pronounced, in some parts of the kingdom, particularly in the county of Kent.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 455

arm'd behind them, and we will so rout the rascals! Take your swords, and let him sleep.

Careless.

What scrivener?

Jolly.

Crop the Brownist; he that the ballad was made on.

Careless.

What ballad?

Jolly.

Have not you heard of the scrivener's wife that brought the blackmoor from the holy land, and made him a Brownist; and in pure charity lay with him, and was delivered of a magpye; a pied prophet; which when the elect saw, they prophesy'd, if it liv'd, 'twould prove a great enemy to their sect; for the midwife cry'd out, 'twas born a bishop, with tippet and white sleeves: at which the zealous mother cry'd, Down with the idol. So the midwife and she, in pure devotion, kill'd it.

Wild.

Kill'd it! what became of them?

Jolly.

Why, they were taken and condemn'd, and suffer'd under a catholick sheriff, that afflicted them with the litanies all the way from Newgate to the gallows; which in rog'ry he made to be set up altar-wise too, and hang'd them without a psalm.

Wild.

But how took they that breach of privilege?

Jolly.

I know not: Gregory turn'd them off, and so they descended, and became Brown-martyrs.

Wild.

And is the husband at door now?

Jolly.

Yes, yes; but he's married again to a rich widow at Wapping; a wench of another temper: one that you cannot please better than by abusing him. I always pick quarrels with him, that she may reconcile us. The peace is always worth a dinner at least. Hark! I hear him.—*[Enter Crop.]*—Save you, Mr. Crop; you are come in the nick to pledge a health.

456 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Crop.
No, fir, I have other business. Shall I be paid my money, or no ? *[Jolly drinks,*

Jolly.
Yes.

Crop.
Sir ?

Jolly.
You asked whether you should be paid your money, or no ? and I said, Yes.

Crop.
Pray, fir, be plain.

Careless.
And be you so, fir ? How durst you come into this room, and company, without leave ?

Crop.
Sir, I have come into good lords company ere now.

Careless.
It may be so ; but you shall either fall upon your knees, and pledge this health, or you come no more into lords companies ; no, by these hilts.

[They tug him, and make him kneel.

Crop.
'Tis idolatry. Do, martyr me, I will not kneel, nor join in sin with the wicked.

Jolly.
Either kneel, or I'll tear thy cloak ; which, by the age and looks, may be that which was writ for in the time of the primitive church.

Crop.
Pay me, and I'll wear a better. It would be honestlier done, than to abuse this, and profane the text : a text that shews, your bishops in those days wore no lawn-sleeves. And you may be asham'd to protect one that will not pay his debts ; the cries of the widow will come against you for it.

Jolly.
Remember, firrah, the dinners and suppers, fat venison, and good words, I was fain to give you ; christening your children still, by the way of brokage. Count that charge, and

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 457

and how often I have kept you from fining for sheriff, and thou art in my debt : then, I am damn'd for speaking well of thee so often against my conscience, which you never consider.

Crop.

I am an honest man, sir.

Jolly.

Then ushering your wife, and Mrs. Ugly her daughter, to plays and masques at court. You think these courtesies deserve nothing in the hundred. 'Tis true, they made room for themselves with their dagger elbows ; and when Spider your daughter laid about her with her breath, the devil would not have sat near her.

Crop.

You did not borrow my money with this language.

Jolly.

No, firrah : then I was fain to flatter you, and endure the familiarity of your family, and hear (nay fain sometimes to join in) the lying praises of the holy sifter that expir'd at Tyburn.

Crop.

Do, abuse her, and be curst. 'Tis well known she dy'd a martyr, and her blood will be upon some of you. 'Tis her orphan's money I require ; and this is the last time I'll ask it : I'll find a way to get it.

[He offers to go, and Jolly stays him.]

Jolly.

Art serious ? By that light, I'll consent, and take it for an infinite obligation if thou wilt teach the rest of my creditors that trick : 'twill save me a world of labour ; for, hang me, if I know how to do't.

Crop.

Well, sir, since I see your resolution, I shall make it my business.

Careless.

Pr'ythee, let's be rid of this fool.

Crop.

Fool ! Let him pay the fool his money, and he'll be gone.

Jolly.

458 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Jolly.

No, fir, not a farthing. 'Twas my business to borrow it, and it shall be yours to get it in again. Nay, by this hand, I'll be feasted too, and have good words. Nay, thou shalt lend me more ere thou gett'st this again.

Crop.

I'll lay my action upon you.

Jolly.

Your action! You rogue, lay two.

[They kick him, and thrust him out of the room.]

Careless.

Lay three for battery—What have we here? A she-creditor too? Who would she speak with?

Enter Faithful: Wild and Careless return and meet her.

Wild.

She looks as if she had trusted in her time.

Careless.

Would you speak with any here, old gentlewoman?

Faithful.

My business is to Mr. Jolly.

Careless.

From yourself, or are you but a messenger?

Faithful.

My business, fir, is from a lady.

Careless.

From a lady! From what lady, pray? Why so coy?

Faithful.

From a lady in the town.

Careless.

Hoh! hoh! from a lady in the town! Is it possible? I should have guess'd you came from a lady in the suburbs, or some country-madam, by your riding face.

Enter Jolly again.

Jolly.

I think we have routed the rascals.—Faithful! what makes thy gravity in a tavern?

Faithful.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 415

Faithful.

Sport, it seems for your saucy companions.

Jolly.

Ho, ho, maul, ho. No fury, Faithful.

Faithful.

'Tis well, fir, My lady presents her service to you, and hath sent you a letter. There's my business.

Careless.

Pr'ythee, who is her lady?

Jolly.

The lady Lovecall.

Careless.

Oh, oh, does she serve that old lady? God help her!

Faithful.

God help her! Pray for yourself, fir; my lady scorns your prayers.

Jolly.

Faithful, come hither. Pr'ythee, is thy lady drunk?

Faithful.

Drunk, fir!

Jolly.

Ay, drunk, or mad; she'd never writ this else. She requires me, here, to send back by you the pearl she gave me this morning! which, sure, she'd never do, if she were sober; for, you know, I earn'd them hard.

Faithful.

I know! What do I know? You will not defame my lady, will you?

Careless.

By no means. This is by way of counsel. Fie! give a thing, and take a thing! If he did not perform, he shall come at night, and pay his scores.

Faithful.

'Tis well, fir. Is this your return for my lady's favours? Shall I have the pearl, fir?

Jolly.

No; and tell her, 'tis the opinion of us all, He that opens her stinking oyster, is worthy of the pearl.

Faithful.

You are a foul-mouth'd fellow, firrah; and I shall live
to

460. THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

to see you load a gallows, when my lady shall find the way to her own again.

Jolly.

If she miss, there are divers can direct her, you know. Adieu, Faithful. Do you hear? Steal privately down by the back-door, lest some knavish boy spy thee, and call thine age, Bawd. [Exit Faithful.

Careless.

Pr'ythee, who is this thing?

Jolly.

'Tis my lady's waiting-woman, her bawd, her she-confessor, herself at second-hand. Her beginning was simple and below stairs, till her lady finding her to be a likely promising bawd, secret as the key at her girdle, obedient as her thoughts; those virtues raised her from the flat petticoat and kercher, to the gorget and bumroll. And I remember 'twas good sport at first, to see the wench perplex'd with her metamorphosis. She since has been in love with all the family, and now sighs after the Levite; and if he forsake her too, I prophesy, a waiting-woman's curse will fall upon her: — to die old, despised, poor, and out of fashion.

Enter Captain.

Captain.

Why do you not hang out a painted cloth, and take two-pence apiece, and let in all the tame fools at door; those sons of wonder that now gape, and think you mad?

Careless.

'Tis no matter what they think: madness is proper here. Are not taverns Bacchus's temples, the place of madness? Does not the sign of madness hang out at the door?

Jolly.

While we within possess our joys and cups, as full of pleasure as weeping Niobe's afflicted eyes were swell'd with grief and tears. Blessing on the cause that made our joys thus complete: for see Plutus in our pockets, Mars by our sides, Bacchus in our head, self-love in our hearts, and change of virgins in our arms; beauties whose eyes and hearts

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 461

hearts speak love and welcome: no rigid thinkers, no niggard beauties that maliciously rake up their fire in green-sickness to preserve a spark that shall flame only in some dull day of marriage; let such swear and forswear, till (of the whole parish) they love each other least, whilst we wisely set out our cobwebs in the most perspicuous places to catch these foolish flies.

Careless.

He's in the right. Do'st think we retreated hither to beat a bargain for a score of sheep, or dispute the legality of votes, and weigh the power of prerogative and parliament, and club for concluding sack, or read the Fathers here till we grow coltive, like those that have worn their suffering elbows bare, to find a knowledge to perplex 'em? A pox on such brain-breaking thoughts: avoid them, and take me into thy hand a glass of eternal sack, and prophesy the restauration of senses, and the fall of a lover from grace; which our dear friend Mr. Jolly will prove; to whom the lady Loveall (by Faithful lately departed) sent for the pearl you wot of.

Captain.

But, I hope, he had the grace to keep them.

Jolly.

No, no; I'm a fool, I!

Captain.

Was not my boy here?

Jolly.

No; we saw him not.

Captain.

A pox of the rogue, he's grown so lazy.

Wild.

Your boy is come in just now, and called for the key of the back door. There's women with him.

Captain.

Oh, that's well! 'tis Wanton. I sent for her to laugh over the story of the old lady and her pearl. Where have you been all this while, firrah?

Enter

462 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Enter Boy.

Boy.

I could overtake the coach, fir, no sooner.

Captain.

The coach ! what coach ?

Boy.

The lady Loveall's

Captain.

The lady Loveall's ! Why, what had you to do with her coach ?

Boy.

I went to give her the letter your worship sent her.

Captain.

The letter ! What letter ?

Boy.

That your worship gave me.

Captain.

That I writ at Ned's house to Wanton ?

Boy.

The letter you gave me, fir, was directed to the lady Loveall, and she storm'd like a mad woman at reading of it.

Careless.

Why, thou wilt not beat the boy for thy own fault ? What letter was it ?

Captain.

'Twas enough, only a relation of the pearl, wherein she finds herself sufficiently abus'd to Wanton.

Jolly.

Now, gentlemen, you have two to laugh at.

Captain.

A pox of fooling, let's resolve what to do ; there's no denying, for she has all the particulars under my hand.

Boy.

You must resolve of something, for she's coming, and stay'd only till the back-door was open'd.

Captain.

How did she know I was here ?

Boy.

Your worship bade me tell her, you would stay here for her.

Careless.

Careless.

How came this mistake?

Captain.

Why, the devil owed us a shame it seems. You know I went home to give Wanton an account how we advanc'd in our design; and when I was writing the superscription, I remember the boy came in and told me, the lady Loveall pass'd by.

Jolly.

And so, it seems, you in pure mistake directed your letter to her.

Careless.

Well, resolve what you'll do with her, when she comes.

Captain.

Faith, bear it like men, 'tis but an old lady lost; let's resolve to defy her, we are sure of our pearl; but lest we prolong the war, take the first occasion you can all to avoid the room; when she's alone, I'll try whether she'll listen to a composition.

Jolly.

Have you no friends in the close committee?

Captain.

Yes, yes, I am an Essex man.

Careless.

Then get some of them to move, it may be voted no letter.

Jolly.

Ay, ay; and after 'tis voted no letter, then vote it false, scandalous, and illegal, and that is in it; they have a precedent for it in the Danish packet, which they took from a foolish fellow, who, presuming upon the law of nations, came upon an embassy to the king without an order, or pass from both houses!

Captain.

Hark, I hear her coming.

Enter Loveall and Faithful.

Loveall.

Sir, I receiv'd a letter, but by what accident I know not; for I believe it was not intended me, tho' the contents concern me.

Captain.

Captain.

Madam, 'tis too late to deny it; is it peace or war you bring? without dispute, if war, I hang out my defiance: if peace, I yield my weapon into your hands.

Loveall.

Are you all unworthy? your whole sex falsehood? is it not possible to oblige a man to be loyal? this is such a treachery no age can match: apply yourself with youth and wit to gain a lady's love and friendship only to betray it? was it not enough you commanded my fortune, but you must wreck my honour too, and instead of being grateful for that charity which still assisted your wants, strive to pay me with injuries, and attempt to make the world believe I pay to lose my fame? and then make me the scorn'd subject of your whore's mirth? Base and unworthy! Do you smile, false one? [*He smiles.*] I shall find a time for you too, and my vengeance shall find you all.

Faithful.

Yea, sir; and you that had such a ready wit to proclaim my lady whore, and me bawd, I hope to see you load a gallows for it.

Captain.

Once again, is it peace or war?

Loveall.

Peace! I'll have thy blood first, dog. Where's my pearl?
— [*She speaks to Wild.*] You ought to right me, sir, in this particular; it was to you I sent them.

Wild.

Madam, I sent not for them.

Captain.

No more words; I have them, I earn'd them, and you paid them.

Faithful.

You are a foul-mouth'd fellow, sirrah.

Loveall.

Peace, wench, I scorn their slander, it cannot shake my honour; 'tis too weighty and too fix'd for their calumny.

Jolly.

I'll be sworn for my part on't, I think it is a great honour

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 245

hour; I am sure I had as much as I could carry away
in the night, and yet there was no miss but this.

Captain.

You? I think so; there's no mark of my work, you see,
and yet I came after thee, and brought away leads. Would
have sunk a sedan-man.

Wild.

By this relation she should be a woman of a great fame.

Careless.

Let that consideration with her condition, and her age,
move some reverence, at least to what she was; madam,
I am sorry I cannot serve you in this particular.

[Exeunt Folly and Careless.]

Loveall.

I see all your mean baseness; pursue your scorn. Com-
let's go, wench; I shall find some to right my fame; and
tho' I have lost my opinion, I have gain'd a knowledge
how to distinguish of love hereafter; and I shall scorn you
and all your sex, that have not soul enough to value a
noble friendship.

Wild.

Pray, madam, let me speak with you.

Captain.

We'll have no whispering; I said it, and I'll maintain
it with my sword.

Enter Drawer.

Drawer.

Sir, there's one without would speak with you.

Captain.

With me?

Drawer.

No, sir, with master Wild.

Wild.

Madam, I'll wait upon you presently. *[Exit Wild.]*

Captain.

Madam, I know my company is displeasing to you,
therefore I'll take my leave: Drawer, show me another
room. *[Exit Captain.]*

*[The captain makes a turn or two, they look at each
other, then he goes out.]*

Vol. XI.

H h

Loveall.

2066 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Doanall.
Oh Faithful, Faithful! I am most miserably abused,
and can find no way to my revenge.

Faithful.
Madam, I'll give them rascals, and specify too,
ere they can tell: for that rascal the captain has a tongue
else will proclaim you, and undo your fame for ever.

Doanall.
Ay, ay, my fame, my fame, Faithful; and if it were
not for mine honour, (which I have kept inviolate to this
minute) I would not care.

Faithful.
This is it. You will still set your affection upon every
thing; I could but tell you on't.

Doanall.
Who could have suspected they would have been so false
to their loves to me; that have been so faithful to them?
How can I find where is neither wild?

Enter Drawer.

Drawer.
The other gentlemen called him away with them.

Doanall.
I'll follow them.

Drawer.
Yes, by this hand. These gentlemen are quickly satis-
fied; what an ugly whore they have got! how she states
it! *[Aside.]*

Doanall.

Come, let's go, wench. *[She offers to go.]*

Drawer.

Mistress, who pays the reckoning?

Doanall.

What says he?

Faithful.

He asks me, who pays the reckoning?

Doanall.

Who pays the reckoning! Why, what have we to do
with the reckoning?

Drawer.

Shut the door, Dick: we'll have the reckoning before
you go. *Faithful.*

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 467

Faithful.

Why, goodman sauce-box, you will not make my lady pay for their reckoning, will you?

Drawer.

My lady! a pox of her title, she'd need of something to make her pass.

Faithful.

What do you say, firrah?

Drawer.

I say, the gentlemen paid well for their sport; and I know no reason why we should lose our reckonings.

Loveall.

What do you take me for, my friend?

Drawer.

In troth, I take you for nothing; but I would be loath to take you for that use I think they made first with you for.

Faithful.

Madam, this is that rascally captain's

Loveall.

Patience, patience. Oh for a bite at the slave's heart! Friend, mistake me not, my name is Loveall, a lady; send one along with him, and you shall have your money.

Drawer.

You must pardon me, madam, I am but a servant; if you be a lady, pray sit in an inner room, and send home your woman for the money; the sum is six pounds, and be pleased to remember the waiters.

Loveall.

Go, Faithful, go fetch the money. Oh revenge, revenge! shall I lose my honour, and have no revenge?

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter Wanton, Captain, Careless, and Wild.

Wanton.

BY all that a longing bride hopes for, which I am not, I am better pleased with this revenge than mine own plot, which takes as I could wish; I have so anointed my high priest with sack, that he would have confuted Baal's priest; and now he does so slumber in his ale, and calls to bed already, swears the sun is set.

Captain.

Faith, wench, her abusing of me made me leave her for the reckoning.

Careless.

Yes, faith, they have treated her upsey whore, lain with her, told, and then pawn'd her.

Wanton.

Yes, yes, you are fine things; I wonder women can endure you; for me, I expect you worse, and am arm'd for't.

Wild.

Faith, let's send and release her, the jest is gone far enough; as I live, I pity her.

Wanton.

Pity her! hang her, and rid the country of her; she is a thing wears out her limbs as fast as her cloaths; one that never goes to bed at all, nor sleeps in a whole skin, but is taken to pieces like a motion, as if she were too long; she should be hang'd for offering to be a whore.

Captain.

As I live, she's in the right; I peep'd once to see what she did before she went to bed; by this light, her maids were dissecting her; and when they had done, they brought some of her to bed, and the rest they either pin'd or hung up, and so she lay dismember'd till morning; in which time, her chamber was strew'd all over, like an anatomy-school.

Wanton.

Wanton.

And when she travels any where, she is transported with as great a care and fear of spoiling, as a juggler's motion, when he removes from fair to fair.

Carleiss.

She is a right broken gamester, who, tho' she lacks wherewithal to play, yet loves to be looking on.

Enter Wanton's Maid.

Barw.

He is awake, and calls for you impatiently; he would fain be in bed, tho' company is all gone.

Wanton.

Are you instructed?

Barw.

Let me alone, I'll warrant you for my part.

Wanton.

Farewell then; you are all ready. Who plays master constable?

Captain.

I, I; and Ned Jolly the sumner.

Wanton.

Farewell, farewell then.

[Exit Wanton and Barw.]

Wild.

It is a delicate wench.

Carleiss.

She has excellent flesh, and a fine face; by this light, we must depose the captain from his reign here.

[They whisper this.]

Wild.

I like her shrewdly; I hate a wench that is all whole and no company; this is a dandy all day, and a fair at night.

Carleiss.

I hope to exalt the parson's household.

Captain.

And what think you? is it not a sweet sin, this, to lig with another man's wife?

[Wanton stoops to, and travels off.]

Is Jolly come?

H h 3

[Wanton above.]

Captain.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Captain.

No, but he'll be here instantly.

Wild.

Is he a-bed?

Watson.

Yes, yes, and he sleeps as if he had been put to bed by his sexton, with *sleep to dust*, and *after it after*.

Captain.

And we'll wake him with that shall be as terrible to him as the latter day.

Watson.

Let him sleep awhile that he may be fresh, else the jest is spoil'd; for it is his sense of his disgrace must work my ends.

Wild.

I'll go home then, and get supper ready, and expect you.

Enter Jelly.

Captain.

Do; our scene lies here. Who's there, Jelly?

Jelly.

Yes.

Captain.

Are you fitted?

Jelly.

Yes, I have got the Black-shears music. I was fain to stay till the last act. And who do you think I saw there?

Wild.

I know not.

Jelly.

Guess.

Wild.

Pr'ythee! I cannot guess.

Jelly.

Your aunt and Mrs. Pleasant, and trusty Secret.

Wild.

What, dear?

Jelly.

The lovers only, so close in a box!

Captain.

Captain. It will be a match, and there's no end. *Psyche,* let them go yet; what is't to us? Let's mend our business now, and think on them hereafter.

Wanton.

A pox upon them, for a couple of stauk-hounds. Have they killed at last? Why, this is fool's fortune. It would be long enough ere one that has wit got such a wife.

Captain.

No more of this now. Have you borrow'd the watchmen's coats?

Jolly.

Yes, and bills, beards, and constable's staff, and lanterns; and let me alone to sit him for the summer. But when this is done, I expect my fee, a tythe-sight at least. *Wanton,* I will lie with thee for thy roguery. What! are you dumb? You will not refuse me, I hope?

Wanton.

Not if I thought thou dear'dst it: but I hate to have it desired indifferently, and but so-so done neither when 'tis done.

Jolly.

I hope you will not disgrace my work, will you?

Wanton.

Faith, they say, thy pleasure lies in thy tongue; and therefore, tho' I do not give thee leave to lie with me, yet I will give thee as good a thing, that will please thee as well.

Jolly.

Some roguery, I expected.

Wanton.

No, faith, I am serious; and because I will please you both, master Wild shall lie here, and you shall have leave to say you do; which will please you as well.

Jolly.

Faith, and my part is some pleasure; else, I have lov'd, enjoy'd, and told, is mistook.

Wanton.

Ay, but never to love, seldom enjoy, and always tell—foh! it stinks, and stains worse than Shoreditch dirt; and

THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

women hate and dread men for't. Why, I that am a
whose profess'd, cannot see youth digest it, tho' it be my
profit and interest. For to be a private whore in this
town, starves in the nest like young birds, when the old
one's kill'd.

Careless.
Excellent girl! 'tis too true. Jolly, your tongue has
kept many a woman honest.

Wanton.

Faith, 'tis a truth: this I shall say, you may all better
your pleasures by, if you will observe it; I dare say, the fear
of telling keeps more women honest than Bridewell hemp;
and were you wise men, and true lovers of liberty, now
were the time to bring wenching to that perfection, no age
could ever have hop'd. Now you may sow such seed of
pleasure, you may be prayed for hereafter. Now, in this
age of zeal and ignorance, would I have you four, in old
cloaths and demure looks, present a petition to both
houses, and say, you are men touch'd in conscience for
your share in that wickedness which is known to their wor-
ships by the pleasure of adultery; and desire it may be
death²⁴, and that a law may be pass'd to that purpose.
How the women will pray for you; and at their own
charges rear statues in memory of their benefactors! The
young and kind would then haunt your chambers, pray,

²⁴ — [desire it may be death, &c.] Alluding to the acts of Oliver
Cromwell's parliament, for punishing adultery, incest, and fornication;
by which it was declared, that the two former should be punishable with
death on the first offence, and the latter upon the second conviction.
— "These acts," an excellent writer (*Mr. Barrington on the Statutes*)
observes, "could not have continued long unrepented, even if Charles (he
"Second had not succeeded to the throne." It has been doubted, whether
there were any instances of carrying them into execution, notwithstanding
the rigidity of the times wherein they were enacted. A news-paper,
however, of that period, furnishes an example, which, from the extraordi-
nary circumstances attending it, may perhaps be considered as not unworthy
of being preserved. In *Mercurius Politicus*, No. 168, from *Thursday*, Aug.
25, to *Thursday*, Sept. 1, 1653, p. 2700; printed by Tho. Newcomb, is
the following passage: "At Monmouth Assize and old man of eighty-
nine years, was put to death for adultery, committed with a woman
above fifty."

and

and present you, and court the sanguine youth, for the sweet sin secur'd by such a law. None would lose an occasion, nor churlishly oppose kind nature, nor refuse to listen to her summons, when youth and passion calls for those forbidden sweets. When such security as your lives are at stake, who would fear to trust? With this law, all oaths and protestations are cancell'd. Letters and bawds would grow useless too. By instinct, the kind will find the kind; and, having one nature, become of one mind. Now we lose an age to observe and know a man's humour ere we dare trust him; but get this law, then 'tis, Like and enjoy. And whereas now, with expence of time and fortune, you may glean some one mistress amongst your neighbours' wives; you shall reap women whole armfuls, as in the common field. There is one small town, wise only in this law; and I have heard them say that know it well, there has been but one execution this hundred years; yet the same party search'd seven years, and could not find an honest woman in the town.

Careless.

An excellent plot! let us about it. Ink and paper, dear Wanton. We will draw the petition presently.

Wanton.

Will master Jolly consent too? You must not then, as soon as a handsome woman is named, smile and stroke your beard; tell him that is next you, you have lain with her. Such a lye is as dangerous as a truth; and 'twere but justice to have thee hang'd for a sin thou never committedst, for having defam'd so many women.

Jolly.

If all those liars were hang'd, I believe the scale would weigh down with the guilty.

Wanton.

One rogue hang'd for example, would make a thousand kind girls. If it take, it shall be called my law, Wanton's Law; then we may go in petticoats again; for women grew imperious and wore the breeches only to fright the poor cuckolds, and make the fools digest their horns. — Are you all ready? Shall I open the door?

Captain.

474 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Captain.

Yes.

Wild.

I'll expect you at my house.

[*Exit Wild one way, and the rest of the company another.*]

Omnus.

We'll come, we'll come.

Captain.

So, knock louder.

[*They knock within, and the Parson discover'd in his bed, and the Bawd with him.*]

Parson.

Who's there? What would you have?

Captain.

Here's his majesty's watch, and master constable's worship must come in. We have a warrant from the lords to search for a delinquent.

Parson.

You come not here. I'll answer your warrant to-morrow,

Jolly.

Break open the door.

Parson.

I would you durst.

Bawd.

Lord, dear! What shall we do?

Parson.

Why, sweet, I'll warrant you. Art thou not my wife, my rib, bone of my bone? I'll suffer any thing ere one hair of thee shall be touch'd.

Bawd.

Hark! They break open the door!

Parson.

They dare not. Why dost thou tremble so? Alas, sweet innocence, how it shakes!

Captain.

Break open the door.

Parson.

I'll complain to the bishop of this insolence.

Bawd.

They come, they come, lamb!

Parson.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 475

Parson.

No matter, sweet, they dare not touch thee. What would you have, Mr. constable? You are very rude.
[*He delivers the warrant.*]

Captain.

Read our warrant, and our business will excuse us. Do you know any such person as you find there?

Parson.

Yes, sir, but not by this name. Such a woman is my wife, and no Lindabrides¹⁵. We were married to-day, and I'll justify her my wife the next court-day. You have your answer, and may be gone.

Jolly.

We must take no notice of such excuses now. If she be your wife, make it appear in court, and she will be deliver'd unto you.

Parson.

If she be my wife! Sir, I have wedded her and bedded her, what other ceremonies would you have? — Be not afraid, sweetheart.

Jolly.

Sir, we can do no less than execute our warrant: we are but servants; and, master constable, I charge you in the king's name to do your duty. Behold the body of the delinquent.

Parson.

Touch her that dares; I'll put my dagger in him. [*He takes his dagger.*] Fear nothing, sweetheart. Master constable, you'll repent this insolence offer'd to a man of my coat.

Bawd.

Help, my dearest, will you let me be help'd thus?

[*Here they strive to take her out.*]

Parson.

Villains, what will you do? Murder! Rape!

Captain.

Yes, yes, 'tis likely; I look like a ravisher!

¹⁵ Lindabrides.] See note on *A Match at Midnight*, A. 2. vol. 7.

Jolly.

Jolly.

Hold him; and we'll do well enough with her.

[As they go to pull her out of the bed, they discover the Bedw. When they let him go, he turns to her, and holds her in his arms.]

Captain.

What have we here, an old woman?

Parson.

Let me go, slaves and murderers.

Captain.

Let him go.

Jolly.

Do any of you know this woman? This is not she we look'd for.

Parson.

No, rascal, that mistake shall not excuse you.

Jolly.

It is old Goodman what d'ye call him, his wife.

Captain.

Hold the candle, and let's see her face.

[When they hold the candle, she lies in his bosom, and his arms about her. She must be as nastily dressed as they can dress her. When he sees her, he falls into a swoon, and shoves her from him.]

Jolly.

What have we here, adultery? Take them both: here will be new matter.

Parson.

Master constable; a little argument will persuade you to believe I am grossly abus'd. Sure, this does not look like a piece that a man would sin to enjoy. Let that then move your pity and care of my reputation. Consider my calling, and do not bring me to a public shame, for what you're sure I am not guilty of, but by plot of some villains.

Bedw.

Dear, will you disclaim me now?

Parson.

Oh impudence!

Jolly.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 417

Jolly.

Master constable, do your duty. Take them both away, as you will answer it.

Captain.

Give him his cassock to cover him.

[They put on his cassock and her coat, and lead them away.]

Parson.

Why, gentlemen, whither will you carry me?

Captain.

To the next justice, I think it is master Wild; he is newly come from travel. It will be a good way, neighbours, to express our respects to him.

Parson.

No, faith, gentlemen, e'en go the next way to Tyburn, and dispatch the business without ceremony; for you'll utterly disgrace me.—This is that damn'd captain. My wife is abroad too: I fear she is of the plot.

Jolly.

Come, away with 'em.

Bawd.

Whither will they lead us, dear?

Parson.

Oh, oh, impudence! Gentlemen, do not lead us together, I beseech you.

Captain.

Come, come, lead them together: no ceremonies. Your faults are both alike.

[Exeunt omnes.]

SCENE II.

Enter Wanton and Wild.

Wanton.

YOU had best brag now, and use me like my lady what-d'ye-call; but if you do, I care not.

Wild.

478 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Wild.

Come, y'are a fool. I'll be a faithful friend, and make good conditions for thee before thy husband be quit.

[Wild sits down with Wanton in his lap.]

Wanton.

You must do it now, or never.

Wild.

Hark! hark! I hear them. — What's the news?

Enter Captain, Jolly, Watch, Bowd, and Parson.

Captain.

We have brought a couple of delinquents before your worship; they have committed a very foul fault.

Jolly.

And we have brought the fault along too, that your worship may see it. You will be the better able to judge of the offenders.

Parson.

Ha! what do I see? My wife in master justice's lap!

Wanton.

What has the poor fellow done?

Captain.

Why, madam, he has been taken in bed with this woman, another man's wife.

Wanton.

In bed with her! and do you raise him to punish him? Master constable, if you would afflict him, command them to lie together again. Is not the man mad?

Parson.

This is fine roguery! I find who rules the roast.

Wild.

Well, to the business. You say, he was taken in bed with another man's wife.

Captain.

Yes, and't like your worship.

Wild.

Make his mittims to the hole at Newgate.

Wanton.

Sure, I have seen this fellow's face.—Friend, have I never seen your face before?

Parson.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 499

Parson.

If I mistake not, I have seen one very like your ladyship's too; she was a captain's cast-whore in the town. I shall have a time to be reveng'd.

Wild.

How now, firrah; are you threatening? Away with him.

Captain.

I'll fetch a stronger watch, fir, and return presently.

Wild.

Do, master constable; and give the poor woman something, and set her free; for I dare say 'twas his wickedness. She looks like one that ne'er thought on such a thing.

Bawd.

God bless your worship, I am innocent. He never left making love, till I consented.

Enter Captain in his own shape.

Parson.

Oh miserable! miserable!

Captain.

How now! what's the news here? My honour'd friend, and master parson, what makes you here at this time of night? why, I should have thought this a time to have envy'd you for your fair bride's embraces. Do you give these favours? Are these your bride-laces? It's a new way.

[Plays with the cord that binds his arms.]

Parson.

Is it new to you?

Wanton.

How now, captain?

Captain.

Wanton, is this your plot to endear your husband to you?

Parson.

No, 'tis thy plot, poor beaten captain: but I shall be reveng'd.

Captain.

Yes, faith, it was my plot, and I glory in't; to undermine

480 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

mine my Machiavel, which so greedily swallow'd that sweet bait that had this hook.

Parson.

'Tis well.

Captain.

But my anger ends not here. Remember the base language you gave me : Son of a thousand fathers ; captain of a tame band ; and one that got my living by the long-staff-speeches ;—for which, and thy former treacheries, I'll ruin thee, slave. I'll have no more mercy on thee, than old women on blind puppies. I'll bring you to your commendations in Latin epistles again ; nor leave thee any thing to live on ; no, not bread, but what thou earn'st by ranking gentlewomen's names in anagrams. And, master justice, if ever you'll oblige me, stand to me now, that I may procure the whipping of him from the reverend bench.

Parson.

I am undone.

Wild.

I can do nothing but justice : you must excuse me. I shall only make it appear how fit it is to punish this kind of sin in that coat in time ; and to crush such serpents in the shells.

Parson.

Mercy ! Oh, mercy !

Wild.

Officers, away with him.

[*They pull him away.*]

Parson.

No mercy ?

Wanton.

Yes, upon conditions, there may be some mercy.

[*The Parson looks very dejected.*]

Wild.

And these they are.—Let the watch stay in t'other room.—First, your wife shall have her liberty, and you yours, as she reports of you ; and when you bring her with you, you shall be welcome. Then you shall not be jealous ; that's another point.

[*Exit Watch.*]

Captain.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 481

Captain.

That he shall have a cure for.

Wanton.

Yes, yes, I'll apply something to his eyes shall cure him of his doubt.

Wild.

Then you shall ask the captain pardon, and your wife. To him you shall allow half your parsonage to maintain her. The deeds are ready within; if you'll sign them, and deliver your wife to our use, she shall discharge you.

Parson.

I submit, sir; but I hope your worship will desire no witness to the use of my wife. The sumner, and the watch too, I hope your worship will enjoin them silence.

Wanton.

You shall not need to fear; I'll have a care of your credit. Call in the watch. Do you know these faces?

[*She discovers them.*]

Parson.

Ha! abus'd!

Jolly.

Nay, no flinching; if you do, I betake me to master sumner again.

Captain.

And I become severe master constable in a trice.

Parson.

No, no, I submit; and I hope we are all friends. I'm sure, I have the hardest part to forgive.

Wanton.

And I, before all this company, promise to forget and forgive thee; and am content to take thee again for my dear and mortal husband, now you are tame; but you must see you do so no more; and give yourself to be blind when it is not fit for you to see; and practise to be deaf; and learn to sleep in time; and find business to call you away, when gentlemen come that would be private.

Captain.

Why so! Now things are as they should be; and when you will obey, you shall command; but when you would be imperious, then I betake me to my constable's staff, till

VOL. XI.

I i

you

482 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

you subscribe, *Cedunt armis toga* ; and if it be false Latin, parson, you must pardon that too.

Jolly.

By this hand, I must have my tythe-night with thee, thou art such a wag. Say, when? When wilt thou give me leave? ha!

Wanton.

Never.

Jolly.

Never!

Wanton.

No, never.

Jolly.

D'ye hear? I am none of them that work for charity. Either resolve to pay, or I kick down all my milk again.

Wanton.

What would you have?

Jolly.

Give me leave to lie with you.

Wanton.

No indeed.

Jolly.

No!

Wanton.

No; but rather than quarrel, as I said before, I will give you leave to say you have lain with me.

Wild.

I am of opinion she owes you nothing now: So, Mrs. Wanton, take your husband; and, to remove all doubts, this night I'll be at the charge of a wedding-supper.

Parson.

This is better than Newgate-hole yet, Bridewell hemp, brown bread, and whip-cord.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 483

SCENE III.

Enter the Widow and Mrs. Pleasant, Master Sad, and Master Constant.

Widow.

BY my troth, it was a good play.

Pleasant.

And I am glad I am come home; for I am e'en as weary with this walking. For God's sake, whereabouts does the pleasure of walking lie? I swear, I have often fought it till I was weary, and yet I could ne'er find it.

Sad.

What do these halberds at your door?

[A watch at the widow's door.]

Widow.

Halberds! Where?

Sad.

There, at your lodging.

Constant.

Friend, what would those watchmen have?

Watchman.

The house is shut up for the sickness this afternoon.

Pleasant.

The sickness!

Watchman.

Yes, forsooth; there's a coachman dead, full of the tokens.

Sad.

Where is the officer?

Watchman.

He is gone to seek the lady of the house, and some other company that din'd here yesterday, to bring her in, or carry her to the Pest-house.

Widow.

Ha! What shall we do, niece?

Sad.

If you please to command our lodging.

I i 2

Pleasant.

484 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Pleasant.

It will be too much trouble.

Widow.

'Let's go to Loveall's.

Pleasant.

Not I, by my faith ; it is scarce for our credits to let her come to us.

Widow.

Why, is she naught ?

Constant.

Faith, madam, her reputation is not good.

Widow.

But what shall we do then ?

Constant.

Dare you adventure to oblige us ?

Widow.

Thank you, fir ; we'll go to my nephew's at Covent Garden : he may shift among his acquaintance.

Pleasant.

It was well thought on ; the Piazza is hard by, too.

Widow.

We'll borrow your coach thither, and we'll fend it you back again straight.

Constant.

We'll wait upon you, madam.

Widow.

This accident troubles me. I am heartily sorry for the poor fellow.

Pleasant.

I am sorry too. But pray, aunt, let us not forget ourselves in our grief. I am not ambitious ²⁶ of a red cross upon the door.

Constant.

²⁶ I am not ambitious of a red cross upon the door.] This alludes to one of the regulations made to prevent the spreading of the plague. When a house became infected, the officers impowered for that purpose immediately placed a guard before it ; which continued there night and day, to prevent any person going from thence, until the expiration of forty days. At the same time, red crosses, of a foot long, were painted on the doors and windows, with the words, LORD HAVE MERCY UPON US, in

Constant.

Mistress Pleasant is in the right ; for if you stay, the officers will put you in.

Widow.

We shall trouble you, sir, for your coach.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE IV.

Enter Parson, Captain, Wild, Wanton, Careless, and Jolly.

Parson.

I AM reconcil'd, and will no longer be an uncharitable churchman. I think this sack is a cooler.

Captain.

What ! does it make you to see your error ?

Parson.

Yes, and consider my man of war ; nor will I again dis-

in great letters, wrote over them, to caution all passengers to avoid infected places.

In a collection of epigrams, intituled, *More Fooles yet* ; written by R. S. (Roger Sharpe,) 1610, 4to, is the following :

" Rusticus, an honest country swayne,
 " Whose education simple was, and plaine,
 " Having survey'd the citie round about,
 " Emptyed his purse, and so went trudging out.
 " But by the way he saw, and much respected,
 " A doore belonging to a house infected ;
 " Whereon was plac't (as 'tis the custome still)
 " *Lord have mercy upon us !* This sad bill
 " The sot perus'd ; and having read, he swore
 " All London was ungodly, but that doore.
 " Here dwells some vertue yet, sayes he ; for this
 " A most devout religious saying is :
 " And thus he wisht (with putting off his hatte)
 " That every doore had such a bill as that."

486 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

pute his letters of mart, nor call them passes for pirates. I am free.

Captain.

And welcome. Any thing but anger is sufferable, and all is jest when you laugh; and I will hug thee for abusing me with thy eyes in their scabbards: but when you rail with drawn eyes, red and naked, threatening a Levite's second revenge to all that touches your concubine, then I betake me to a dark lanthorn and a constable's staff; and by help of these fathers whom I cite, I prove my text, Women that are kind ought to be free.

Parson.

But, captain, is it not lawful for us shepherds to reclaim them?

Captain.

A mere mistake; for sin, like the sea, may be turned out; but will ne'er grow less: and though you should drain this mistress Doll, yet the whore will find a place, and perhaps overflow some maid, till then honest; and so you prove the author of a new sin, and the defiler of a pure temple; therefore I say, while you live, let the whore alone, till she wears out; nor is it safe to vamp them, as you shall find. Read Ball the first and the second,

Wild.

No more discourse. Strike up, fiddlers.

Captain.

See, who's that knocks?

[*A country-dance. When they are merry, singing catches and drinking healths, the Widow, Mrs. Pleasant, and the two lovers, knock at the door.*]

Servant.

Sir, 'tis Mistress Pleasant, and the two gentlemen that din'd there to-day.

Wild.

My aunt and mistress Pleasant!

Jolly.

What a pox makes them abroad at this time of night?

Captain.

It may be, they have been a wenching.

Servant.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 457

Servant.

Sir, they were upon alighting out of the coach when I came up.

Wild.

Quickly, Mrs. Wanton; you and your husband to bed; there's the key. Mr. Parson, you know the way to the old chamber; and to it quickly; all is friends now.

Parson.

Sweetheart, we'll steal away.

Wanton.

The devil on them, they have spoil'd our mirth.

[*Exit Parson.*]

Wild.

Jack, get you and your company down the back-way into the kitchen, and stay there, till we see what this visit means.

[*Exeunt Fiddlers.*]

Captain.

Means! What should it mean? It is nothing but the mischievous nature all honest women are endu'd with, and naturally given to spoil sport. I wonder what fart blew them hither to-night.

Wild.

Nay, have a little patience, captain; you and Mr. Jolly must sit quietly a while within, till we know the cause.

Captain.

It is but deferring our mirth for an hour, or so.

Servant.

Sir, here's my lady.

Wild.

Quickly remove those things there. Captain, step in there —

Enter Widow, Pleasant, Sad, and Constant.

Widow.

Nephew, do you not wonder to see me here at this time of night?

Wild.

I know, it is not ordinary, therefore I believe 'tis some design. What is it Mrs. Pleasant? Shall I make one?

I i 4

Pleasant.

Pleasant.

As I live, fir, pure necessity. Neither mirth nor kindness hath begot this visit.

Careless.

What! is your coach broke?

Widow.

Faith, nephew, the truth is, the sickness is in my house, and my coachman dy'd since dinner.

Wild.

The sickness!

Pleasant.

Ay, as I live: we have been walking since the play; and when we came home, we found the watch at the door, and the house shut up.

Sad.

And a constable gone in search of all those that dined there to-day, with order to furnish us lodgings in the pest-house.

Widow.

Are you not afraid to receive us?

Wild.

As I live, the accident troubles me; and I am sorry such a misfortune should beget me this favour; and I could wish myself free from the honour, if the cause were removed too.

Pleasant.

As I live, Mr. Wild, I must have been forc'd to have lain with my servant to-night, if you had not received me.

Wild.

If I thought so, I would carry you out in my arms, I am so much Mr. Constant's friend.

Pleasant.

But are you more his friend than mine, Mr. Wild?

Wild.

No; but I presume by this he has gain'd so much interest, as he would not be very displeasing to you.

Constant.

Oh! your humble servant, fir.

Pleasant.

If I had had a mind to that lodging, I had ne'er come
hither;

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 439

hither ; for when I have a mind to it, I'll marry without dispute ; for I fear no body so much as a husband ; and when I can conquer that doubt, I'll marry at a minute's warning.

Widow.

No dispute now : can you furnish us with a couple of beds ?

Wild.

Yes, yes,

Widow.

And have you e'er a woman in the house ?

Wild.

My sister's maid is here.

Careless.

Madam, if you resolve to do us this honour, you shall find clean linen, and your beds quickly ready.

Widow.

But where will my nephew and you, fir, lie to-night ?

Careless.

Oh, madam, we have acquaintance enough in the town.

Widow.

Well, fir, we'll accept this courtesy ; and when you come into Suffolk, you shall command my house.

Wild.

Pr'ythee call Bess, and bid her bring sheets to make the bed ; I'll go and fetch in a pallet, 'tis as good a bed as the other ; and if you will stay the removing, we'll set up a bedstead.

Pleasant.

No, a pallet, pray ; but what shall we do for night-cloaths, aunt ?

Wild.

Why, what are those you bought my sister ?

Widow.

Is not that linen gone yet ?

Careless.

No faith, madam, his man forgot it, till the carriers were gone last week.

Wild.

Will that serve ?

Pleasant.

490 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Pleasant.

Yes, yes, pray do us the favour to let us have it, 'tis but washing o't again.

Wild.

Nay, it will serve : discourse no more ; I'll fetch the bundle ; and pr'ythee fetch the combs and looking-glasses I bought the other day : for other necessaries that want a name the wench shall furnish you with.

Widow.

Nay, but where is she, nephew ?

Wild.

I'll call her, if she be not gone to-bed ; it is an ignorant young thing ; I am to send her to my sister's in the country ; I have had such ado to put her in the fashion.

Pleasant.

What country is she ? Pr'ythee, Mr. Wild, let's see her.

Wild.

I'll call her down..

[Exit Wild.]

Sad.

Madam, now we see y'are safe, we'll kiss your hands, and wait upon you to-morrow.

Widow.

It must be early then, sir, for I shall borrow my nephew's coach, and be gone betimes into the country, to take a little fresh air, and prevent the search.

Constant.

Pray, madam, be pleased to command ours.

Wild.

No, sir, I humbly thank you ; my nephew's will hold our company.

Constant.

Your humble servant, mistress Pleasant,

Sad.

Your servant, madam.

Pleasant.

Good night, Mr. Constant.

Widow.

Sir, you'll excuse us, we have no body here to light you down.

Careless.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 491

Careless.

Madam, I am here your servant as much as those that wear your livery; and this house holds no other; we can be civil, madam, as well as extravagant.

Widow.

Your humble servant, Mr. Careless.

Careless.

Gentlemen, if you'll wait on my lady to her chamber, then I'll wait upon you down.

Sad.

You oblige us, sir.

Exeunt omnes.

SCENE V.

Enter Wild, Captain, Wanton, Parson, and Jolly.

Captain.

THE plague!

Wild.

The plague, as I live; and all my relation is truth, every syllable. But, Mrs. Wanton, now must you play your master-piece; be sure to blush, and appear but simple enough, and all is well; thou wilt pass for as arrant a chamber-maid as any is in the parish.

Parson.

Hum! new plots?

Captain.

Let me put on a petticoat, and a muffler, and I'll so chamber-maid it, and be so diligent with the clean smock and the chamber-pot—Now would I give all the shoes in my shop to lie with 'em both.

Wanton.

Let me alone to fit them; I can make a scurvy curtsy naturally: remember, I am an Essex woman, if they ask.

Wild.

Come, come quickly, take those sweet-meats; bring the

492 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

the great cake and knife, and napkins, for they have not supp'd; and, Captain, make some lemonade, and send it by the boy to my chamber; and, do you hear, Jolly, you must stay till we come, for we must lie with you to-night.

Jolly.

We'll stay, but make haste then.

Captain.

And bring our cloaks and swords out with you.

Wild.

I will, I will; but be quiet all.

Parson.

Mr. Wild, I hope there is no plot in this.

Captain.

There's no jealousy, Mr. Parson; 'tis all serious, upon my life. Come away with us. [Exit omnes.

SCENE VI.

The tying-room, curtains drawn, and they discourse. His chamber, two beds, two tables, looking-glasses, night-cloaths, waistcoats, sweet-bags, sweet-meats, and wines; Wanton dress'd like a chamber-maid; all above, if the scene can be so order'd.

Enter Widow and Mrs. Pleasant, Wild and Careless; the Widow and Mrs. Pleasant salute Wanton.

Wild.

FAITH, aunt, 'tis the first time I have had the honour to see you in my house; and as a stranger I must salute you.

Widow.

As I live, nephew, I'm agham'd to put you to this trouble,

Wild.

It is an obligation. — Mrs. Pleasant, I know you have

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 491

have not supp'd; I pray you be pleas'd to taste these sweet-meats, they are of Sall's doing; but I understand not sweet-meats, the wine I'll answer for; and, in a word, you are welcome: you are Patrona, and we your slaves.

Careless.

Good rest, and a pleasing dream; your humble servant wishes you.

Widow.

Good night, nephew; good night, Mr. Careless.

Pleasant.

Good night, Mr. Careless; your humble servant, Mr. Wild.

[Exeunt Wild and Careless.]

Widow.

Why ay, here are men have some wit; by this good night, had we lain at my servant's, we should have found the lac'd cap and slippers, that have been entail'd upon the family these five descents, advanc'd upon the cupboard's head instead of plate.

[They sit down to undress them.]

Pleasant.

They are a couple of the readiest youths too; how they run and do all things with a thought! I love him for sending his sister's maid: a pretty wench!

Widow.

Pray, let's go to-bed; I am weary.

Pleasant.

You will not go to bed with all those windows open: sweetheart, pr'ythee shut them, and bring me hither — dost understand me? as I live, 'tis a great while since I went to the play.

Widow.

It has been one of the longest days; a year of them would be an age.

Pleasant.

Oh, do you grow weary? you'll break your covenant ere the year go out.

[The curtains are closed.]

Widow.

Pr'ythee, shut the windows, and come pin up my hair.

S C E N E

494 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

SCENE VII.

Enter Wild, Jolly, Careless, Captain, and Parson, and Fiddlers, and one with a torch, with their cloaks and their swords, putting them on. Enter Wild's man.

Wild.

SEE you wait diligently, and let them want nothing they call for. — Come, shall we go? 'tis very late.

Captain.

But how does Wanton carry it?

Wild.

They saluted her; and Mrs. Pleasant swore you might see the country-simplicity in her face.

Parson.

A pox upon her, crafty gypfy.

Captain.

Why, art not thou glad to see she can be honest when she will?

Parson.

I'll shew you all a trick for her, within these few days, or I'll miss my aim.

Jolly.

Come, let's go.

[They all offer to go.]

Captain.

I have a mind to stay till Wanton comes.

Wild.

Stay a little then, for 'twill not be long ere they be a-bed.

Enter Wanton.

Captain.

I hear Wanton's voice.

Wild.

Are they a-bed.

Wanton.

Yes, and have so admir'd you and Mr. Careless, and abus'd the lovers — Well, gentlemen, you are the wits of the
the

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 495

the time ; but if I might counsel — well, they might lie alone this night ; but it should go hard if I lay not with one of them within a month.

Careless.

Were they so taken with their lodging ?

Wanton.

All that can be said they said : you are the friendliest men, the readiest men, the handsomest men ; men that had wit, and could tell when to be civil, and when to be wild ; and Mrs. (what's her name) the younger, asked why Mr. Wild did not go a wooing to some rich heir ; upon her conscience, she said, you would speed.

Careless.

Well, well, there's a time for all things ; come, let's go.

[They offer to depart.]

Wild.

Take a light. — Good night, Wanton.

Captain.

D'ye hear, d'ye hear ? let me speak with you.

[They all come back again.]

Wild.

What's the business ?

Captain.

I cannot get hence this night : but your good angels hang at my heels ; and if I can prevail, you shall stay.

Wild.

What to do ?

Captain.

What to do ! why I'll be hang'd if all this company do not guests.

Jolly.

Pr'ythee, what should we stay for ?

Captain.

For the widow, and her niece : Are they worth the watching for a night ?

Wild.

Yes, certainly.

Captain.

Then take my counsel, and let me give it out y'are married : you have new cloaths come home this morning, and there's

there's that you spoke of I'll fetch from the taylor's ; and here's a parson shall rather give them his living, than stay for a licence ; the fiddlers too are ready to salute 'em.

Careless.

But if they refuse ?

Jolly.

Which, upon my conscience, they will.

Captain.

As you hope, else you are laugh'd at for missing the widow. Ned, follow my counsel ; appear at her chamber-window in thy shirt, and salute all that passes by ; let me alone to give it out, and invite company, and provide dinner ; then when the business is known, and I have presented all your friends at court with ribbands, she must consent, or her honour is lost, if you have but the grace to swear it, and keep your own counsel.

Careless.

By this hand, he has reason ; and I'll undertake the widow.

Wild.

It will incense them, and precipitate the business, which is in a fair way now ; and if they have wit, they must hate us for such a treachery.

Captain.

If they have wit they will love you ; beside, if it come to that, we two will swear we saw you married, and the parson shall be sworn he did it : — Priest, will you not swear ?

Parson.

Yes, any thing ; what is't, Captain ?

Wild.

If this jest could do it, yet 'tis base to gain a wife so poorly : she came hither too for sanctuary ; it would be an uncivil and an unhospitable thing, and look as if I had not merit enough to get a wife without stealing her from herself ; then, 'tis in mine own house.

Captain.

The better ; nay, now I think on't, why came she hither ? how do you know the plague is there ? all was well at dinner ; I'll be hang'd if it be not a plot ; the
lovers

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 497

lovers too whom you abus'd at dinner, are join'd with them ; a trick, a mere trick of wit to abuse us ; and to-morrow, when the birds are flown, they'll laugh at you, and say, two country-ladies put themselves naked into the hands of three travel'd city-wits, and they durst not lay hold on them.

Careless.

A pox upon these niceties !

Wanton.

If they have not some design upon you, hang me ; why did they talk so freely before me else ?

Careless.

Let's but try ; we are not now to begin to make the world talk ; nor is it a new thing to them to hear we are mad fellows.

Captain.

If you get them, are they worth having ?

Wild.

Having ! yes.

Captain.

If you miss them, the jest is good. Pr'ythee, Ned, let me prevail ; 'tis but a mad trick.

Wild.

If we would, how shall we get into the chamber ?

Wanton.

Let me alone for that ; I'll put on my country simplicity, and carry in a chamber-pot ; then, under pretence of bolting the back-door, I'll open it—and yet I grudge them the sport so honestly ; for you wenchers make the best husbands ; after you are once married, one never sees you.

Captain.

I warrant thee, wench.

Wanton.

No, faith, I have observ'd it, they are still the doting'st husbands, and then retreat and become justices of the peace, and none so violent upon the bench, as they, against us poor sinners. Yet I'll do it ; for, upon my conscience, the young gentlewoman will fall upon her back, and thank me.

[Exit Wanton.]

498 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Captain.

Away, go then, and leave your fooling; and in the morning, Ned, get in, and plead naked with your hands in the bed.

Parson.

And if they cry, put your lips in their mouths, and stop them.

Captain.

Why, look you, you have the authority of the church, too.

Wild.

Well, I am now resolv'd; go you about your part, and make the report strong.

Careless.

And, d'ye hear? be sure you set the cook at work, that if we miss we may have a good dinner, and good wine, to drink down our grief.

Captain.

Miss! I warrant thee, 'twill thrive. [Exit Captain.

Careless.

Nay, if I knock not down the widow, geld me, and come out to-morrow compleat uncle, and salute the company with, You are welcome, gentlemen, and Good-morrow, nephew Ned.

Wild.

Uncle Tom, good morrow, uncle Tom.

Enter Wanton.

Wanton.

All's done; the door is open, and they're as still as children's thoughts; 'tis time you made you ready, which is, to put off your breeches, for 'tis almost day; and take my counsel, be sure to offer force enough, the less reason will serve; especially you, master Wild, do not put a maid to the pain of saying, Ay.

Wild.

I warrant thee, wench; let me alone.

Careless.

We'll in and undress us, and come again; for we must go in at the back-door.

Wild.

I'll meet you. Is the Captain gone?

[Exeunt Wild and Careless.

Wanton.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 499

Wanton.

Yes, yes, he's gone.

Jolly.

Come, master Parson, let us see the cook in readiness. Where are the fiddlers? What will become of our plot? for the coach-man, master Sad, and his friend will stink of their jest if this thrive.

Parson.

They have slept all night, on purpose to play all day.

Jolly.

When the ribbands and points come from the Exchange, pray see the fiddlers have some; the rogues will play so out of tune all day else, they will spoil the dancing, if the plot do take.

Enter Wild, and Careless, in their shirts, with drawers under; night-gowns on, and in slippers.

Wanton.

Let's see them in the chamber first, and then I shall go with some heart about the business. — So, so, creep close and quietly: you know the way; the widow lies in the high bed, and the pallet is next the door.

[They kneel at the door to go in; she shakes her coats over 'em.]

Wild.

Must we creep?

Wanton.

Yes, yes, down upon your knees; always, till you get a woman, and then stand up for the cause: stay, let me shake my smock over you for luck sake.

Jolly.

Why so? I warrant you thrive.

Parson.

A pox take you, I'll pare your nails when I get you from this place once.

Wanton.

Sweet heart, sweet heart, off with your shoes.

Parson.

Ay, with all my heart, there's an old shoe after you. Would I gave all in my shop the rest were furnish'd with wives too!

500 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Jolly.

Parson, the sun is rising; go send in the fiddlers, and set the cook on work; let him chop soundly.

Parson.

I have a tythe-pig at home, I'll e'en sacrifice it to the wedding.

[*Exit Parson.*]

Wanton.

They will find them in good posture, they may take privy marks if they please; for they said it was so hot they could endure no cloaths, and my simplicity was so diligent to lay them naked, and with such twists and turns fastened them to the feet, I'll answer for't they find not the way into them in an hour.

Enter Servant and Parson.

Jolly.

Why then they may pull up their smocks, and hide their faces.

Servant.

Master Jolly, there was one without would speak with you.

Jolly.

Who was it?

Servant.

It is the lady that talks so well.

Jolly.

They say, indeed, she has an excellent tongue; I would she had chang'd it for a face; 'tis she that has been handsome.

Parson.

Who, not the poetess we met at Mr. Sad's?

Jolly.

Yes, the same.

Parson.

Sure she's mad.

Jolly.

Pr'ythee, tell her I am gone to bed.

Servant.

I have done as well, sir; I told her Mrs. Wanton was here; at which discreetly, being touch'd with the guilt of her face, she threw out a curse or two, and retreated

Wanton.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 501

Wanton.

Who is this you speak of? I will know who 'tis.

Parson.

Why 'tis she that married the Genoa merchant; they cozen'd one another.

Wanton.

Who? Peg Driver, bewgle-eyes?

Jolly.

The same, the same.

Wanton.

Why, she is ugly now?

Parson.

Yes; but I have known her, by this hand, as fine a wench as ever sinn'd in town or suburbs: when I knew her first, she was the original of all the wainscot chamber-maids with brooms, and bare-foot madams, you see sold at Temple-bar and the Exchange.

Wanton.

Ah! th'art a devil! how could'st thou find in thy heart to abuse her so? Thou lov'st antiquities too: the very memory that she had been handsome should have pleaded something.

Jolly.

Was handsome, signifies nothing to me.

Wanton.

But she's a wit, and a wench of an excellent discourse.

Parson.

And as good company as any's i'th' town.

Jolly.

Company! for whom, Leather-ears, his majesty of Newgate-watch? There her story will do well while they louse themselves.

Parson.

Well, you are curious now; but the time was when you have skip'd for a kiss.

Jolly.

Pr'ythee, Parson, no more of wit, and was handsome; but let us keep to this text—[*he kisses Wanton*!—and with joy think upon thy little Wanton here, that's kind, soft, sweet, and sound: these are epithets for a mistress, nor

K k 3

is

302 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

is there any elegance in a woman like it. Give me such a naked scene to study night and day: I care not for her tongue, so her face be good. A whore, dress'd in verse, and set speeches, tempts me no more to that sweet sin, than the statute of whipping can keep me from it. This thing we talk'd on, which retains nothing but the name of what she was, is not only poetical in her discourse, but her tears and her love, her health, nay her pleasure, were all fictions, and had scarce any live flesh about her till I administer'd.

Parson.

Indeed, 'tis time she set out, and gave others leave to play; for a reverend whore is an unseemly sight; besides it makes the sin malicious, which is but ventral else.

Wanton.

Sure he'll make a taste of conscience on't: you should do well (sweet heart) to recommend her case to your brethren that attend the committee of affection, that they may order her to be found and young again, for the good of the commonwealth.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter Fiddlers, Jolly, and Wanton.

Jolly.

O H, are you ready? are you ready?

Fiddlers.

Yes, an't like your worship.

Jolly.

And did you bid the cook chop lustily, and make a noise?

Fiddlers.

Yes, fir, he's at it.

Wanton.

I hear the Captain.

Enter

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 509

Enter the Captain.

Jolly.

Have you brought cloaths and ribbands?

Captain.

Yes, yes, all is ready: Did you hear them squeak yet?

Wanton.

No, by this light: I think 'tis an appointment, and we have been all abus'd.

Captain.

Give the fiddlers their ribbands, and carry the rest in. Mrs. Wanton, you must play my lady's woman to-day, and mince it to all that come, and hold up your head finely when they kiss you; and take heed of swearing when you are angry, and pledging whole cups when they drink to you.

Wanton.

I'll warrant you, for my part.

Captain.

Go, get you in then, and let your husband dip the rosemary ²⁷.

Jolly.

Is all ready?

Captain.

All, all; some of the company are below already: I have so blown it about, one porter is gone to the Exchange to invite Mr. Wild's merchant to his wedding, and, by the way, to bid two or three fruiterers to send in fruit for such a wedding; another in my lady's name to Sall's for sweet-meats: I swore at Bradborn in his shop myself, that I wonder'd he would disappoint Mr. Wild for his points, and having so long warning; he protested 'twas not his fault, but they were ready, and he would send John with them presently. One of the watermen is gone to the Melon garden; the other to Cook's at the Bear, for some bottles of his best wine; and thence to Gracious-street to the poulterer's, and all with directions to send in provisions for Mr. Wild's wedding; and who

²⁷ Rosemary.] See note on *A Match at Midnight*, A. 5,

504 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

should I meet at the door, but apricock Tom and Mary, waiting to speak with her young master ! they came to beg that they might serve the feast ; I promis'd them they should, if they would cry it up and down the town, to bring company, for Mr. Wild was resolv'd to keep open house.

Jolly.

Why, then here will be witnesses enough.

Captain.

But who should I meet at the corner of the Piazza, but Joseph Taylor ²⁸ ! he tells me, there's a new play at the Fryers to-day ; and I have bespoke a box for Mr. Wild and his bride.

Jolly.

And did not he wonder to hear he was married ?

Captain.

Yes ; but I told him 'twas a match his aunt made for him when he was abroad.

Jolly.

And I have spread it sufficiently at court, by sending to borrow plate for such a wedding.

Enter a Servant.

Servant.

There's half a dozen coach-fulls of company lighted ; they call for the bride-laces and points.

Captain.

Let the fiddlers play then, and bid God give them joy, by the name of my lady Careless and Mrs. Wild.

Fiddlers.

Where shall we play, fir ?

Jolly.

Come with us, we'll shew you the window.

²⁸ *Joseph Taylor.*] One of the original actors in the plays of Shakespeare. See an account of him in "A Dialogue on Plays and Players," vol. 12.

S C E N E

SCENE II.

[The fiddlers play in the tiring-room ; and the stage-curtains are drawn, and discover a chamber, as it were, with two beds, and the ladies asleep in them ; Mr. Wild being at Mrs. Pleasant's bed-side, and Mr. Careless at the Widow's. The musick awakes the widow.]

Widow.

NIECE, niece, niece Pleasant.
[She opens the curtain and calls her ; she is under a canopy.]

Pleasant.

Ha ! I hear you, I hear you ; what would you have ?

Widow.

Do you not hear the fiddlers ?

Pleasant.

Yes, yes ; but you have wak'd me from the finest dream —

Widow.

A dream ! what was't, some knavery ?

Pleasant.

Why, I know not, but 'twas merry ; e'en as pleasing as some sins : well, I'll lie no more in a man's bed, for fear I lose more than I get.

Wild.

Hark ! that's a new tune.

Pleasant.

Yes, and they play it well. This is your jaunty nephew ; I would he had less of the father in him, I'd venture to dream out my dream with him ; o' my conscience he's worth a dozen of my dull servant ; that's such a troublesome visitant, without any kind of conveniency.

Widow.

Ay, ay, so are all of that kind ; give me your subject lover ; those you call servants are but troubles, I confess.

Pleasant.

What is the difference, pray, betwixt a subject and a servant lover ?

Widow.

Widow.

Why, one I have absolute power over, the other's at large; your servant-lovers are those who take mistresses upon trial, and scarce give them a quarter's warning before they are gone.

Pleasant.

Why, what do your subject-lovers do?—I am so sleepy.

Widow.

Do! All things for nothing: then, they are the diligentest and the humblest things a woman can employ; nay, I ha' seen of them tame, and run loose about a house: I had one once, by this light, he would fetch and carry, go back, seek out; he would do any thing: I think some falconer bred him.

Pleasant.

By my troth, I am of your mind.

Widow.

He would come over for all my friends; but it was the dogged'st thing to my enemies; he would sit upon's tail before them, and frown like John-a-Napes when the pope is named: he heard me once praise my little spaniel bitch Smut for waiting, and hang me if I stir'd for seven years after, but I found him lying at my door.

Pleasant.

And what became of him?

Widow.

Faith, when I married he forsook me: I was advis'd since, that if I would ha' spit in's mouth sometimes, he would have stay'd.

Pleasant.

That was cheap, but 'tis no certain way; for 'tis a general opinion, that marriage is one of the certain'st cures for love that one can apply to a man that is sick of the sighings; yet if you were to live about this town still, such a fool would do you a world of service: I'm sure Secret will miss him, he would always take such a care of her, h'as saved her a hundred walks for hoods and masks.

Widow.

Yes, and I was certain of the earliest fruits and flowers that the spring afforded.

Pleasant.

Pleasant.

By my troth 'twas foolishly done to part with him; a few crumbs of your affection would have satisfy'd him, poor thing!

Widow.

Thou art in the right; in this town there's no living without 'em; they do more service in a house for nothing, than a pair of those what-d'ye-call-'ems, those he-waiting-women, beasts, that custom imposes upon ladies.

Pleasant.

Is there none of them to be had now, think you? I'd fain get a tame one to carry down into the country.

Widow.

Faith, I know but one breed of them about the town that's right, and that's at the court: the lady that has them, brings 'em up all by-hand: she breeds some of them from very puppies: there's another wit too in the town that has of them; but her's will not do so many tricks; good fullen diligent waiters those are which she breeds, but not half so serviceable.

Pleasant.

How does she do it? is there not a trick in't?

Widow.

Only patience; but she has a heavy hand with 'em (they say) at first, and many of them miscarry; she governs them with signs, and by the eye, as Banks breeds his horse²⁹: there

²⁹ — *As Banks breeds his horse.*] Banks who was famous for a horse, which was taught to shew tricks, and perform several feats of art, to the great admiration of the virtuoso spectator. This celebrated horse is mentioned by several writers of Queen Elizabeth's time, as Ben Jonson, in *Every Man out of his Humour*, A. 4. S. 6.

"He keeps more ado with this monster than ever Banks did with his horse, or the fellow with the elephant."

Jack Drum's Entertainment, Sign. B. 3.

"It shall be chronicled next after the death of *Banks his horse*."

Dekker's Satiromastrix.

"I'll teach thee to turn me into *Banks his horse*, and to tell gentlemen, I am a juggler and can shew tricks."

Dekker's Wonderfull Yeare, 1603.

"— These are those ranck riders of art, that have so spur gal'd your lustie wing'd Pegasus, that now he begins to be out of flesh, and

"(even

108 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

there are some too that arrive at writing, and those are the right breed, for they commonly betake themselves to poetry; and if you could light on one of them, 'twere worth your money; for 'tis but using of him ill, and praising his verses sometimes, and you are sure of him for ever.

Pleasant.

Bat do they never grow surly, aunt?

Widow.

Not if you keep them from raw flesh; for they are a kind of lyon-lovers, and if they once taste the sweet of it, they'll turn to their kind.

Pleasant.

Lord, aunt, there will be no going without one this summer into the country; pray let's enquire for one, either a he-one to entertain us, or a she-one to tell us the story of her love; 'tis excellent to bedward, and makes one as drowsy as prayers.

Widow.

Faith, niece, this parliament has so destroy'd 'em, and the Platonick humour, that 'tis uncertain whether we shall get one or no; your leading members in the lower house have so cow'd the ladies, that they have no leisure to breed any of late: their whole endeavours are spent now in feasting, and winning close committee men, a rugged kind of sullen fellows, with implacable stomachs and hard hearts, that make the gay things court and observe them as much as the foolish lovers use to do. Yet I think I know one she-lover, but she is smitten in years o'th' wrong side of forty; I am certain she is poor too, and, in this lean age for courtiers, she perhaps would be glad to run this summer in our park.

Pleasant.

Dear aunt, let us have her. Has she been famous? has she good tales, think you, of knights, such as have been false or true to love, no matter which?

"(even only for provander sake) is glad to shew tricks like Banks his curtall."

See Digby on Bodies, c. 37. p. 393. Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World, 1st part. p. 178. Gayton's notes on Don Quixote, p. 4. p. 289.

Widow.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 309

Widow.

She cannot want cause to curse the sex ; handsome, witty, well-born, and poor, in court cannot want the experience how false young men can be : her beauty has had the highest fame ; and those eyes, that weep now unpity'd, have had their envy, and a dazzling power.

Pleasant.

And that tongue, I warrant you, which now grows hoarse with flattering the great law-breakers, once gave law to princes : was it not so, aunt ? Lord, shall I die without begetting one story ?

Widow.

Penthesilea, nor all the cloven knights the poets treat of, yclad in mightiest petticoats, did her excel for gallant deeds, and, with her honour, still preserv'd her freedom. My brother lov'd her ; and I have heard him swear Minerva might have own'd her language ; an eye like Pallas, Juno's wrists, a Venus for shape, and a mind chaste as Diana, but not so rough ; never uncivilly cruel, nor faulty kind to any ; no vanity, that sees more than lovers pay ; nor blind to a gallant passion : her maxim was, he that could love, and tell her so handsomely, was better company, but not a better lover than a silent man ; thus all passions found her civility, and she a value from all her lovers. But, alas, niece, this *was* (which is a sad word) *was* handsome, and *was* beloved, are abhorr'd sounds in women's ears.

[*The fiddlers play again.*

Pleasant.

Hark, the fiddlers are merry still. Will not Secret have the wit to find us this morning, think you ?

Fiddlers.

God give you joy, Mr. Careless ! God give your ladyship joy, my lady Wild !

Widow.

What did the fellow say, God give me joy ?

Pleasant.

As I live, I think so.

Fiddlers.

God give you joy, Mrs. Pleasant Wild !

Widow.

510 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Widow.

This is my nephew ; I smell him in this knavery.

Pleasant.

Why did they give me joy by the name of Mrs. Wild ? I shall pay dear for a night's lodging, if that be so ; especially lying alone. By this light, there is some knavery a-foot.

[All the company confused without, and bid God give them joy.]

Jolly.

Rise, rise, for shame, the year's afore you.

Captain.

Why, Ned Wild, why, Tom, will you not rise and let's in ? What, is it not enough to steal your wedding over night, but lock yourselves up in the morning too ? All your friends stay for points here, and kisses from the brides.

Wild.

A little patience ! you'll give us leave to dress us ?

[The women squeak when they speak.]

Careless.

Why, what's a clock, Captain ?

Captain.

It's late.

Careless.

Faith, so it was before we slept.

Widow.

Why, nephew, what means this rudeness ? As I live, I'll fall out with you. This is no jest.

Wild.

No, as I live, aunt ; we are in earnest ; but my part lies here, and there's a gentleman will do his best to satisfy you ; *[they catch the women in their arms]* and, sweet Mrs. Pleasant, I know you have so much wit as to perceive this business cannot be remedied by denials. Here we are, as you see, naked, and thus have saluted hundreds at the window that past by, and gave us joy this morning.

Pleasant.

Joy ! of what ? what do you mean ?

Careless.

Madam, this is visible ; and you may coy it, and refuse

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 577

use to call me husband ; but I am resolv'd to call you wife, and such proofs I'll bring as shall not be denied.

[Careless kisses the widow.]

Widow.

Promise yourself that ; see whether your fine wits can make it good — You will not be uncivil ?

Careless.

Not a hair, but what you give, and that was in the contract before we undertook it ; for any man may force a woman's body, but we have laid we will force your mind.

Wild.

But that needs not ; for we know by your discourse last night and this morning, we are men you have no aversion to ; and I believe, if we had taken time, and woo'd hard, this would have come o' course ; but we had rather win you by wit, because you defy'd us.

Widow.

'Tis very well, if it succeed.

Careless.

And, for my part, but for the jest of winning you, and this way, not ten jointures should have made me marry.

Widow.

This is a new way of wooing.

Careless.

'Tis so, madam ; but we have not laid our plot so weakly (tho' it were sudden) to leave it in any body's power, but our own, to hinder it.

Pleasant.

Do you think so ?

Wild.

We are secure enough, if we can be true to ourselves.

Careless.

Yet we submit in the midst of our strength, and beg you will not wilfully spoil a good jest by refusing us. By this hand, we are both sound, and we'll be strangely honest, and never in ill humours ; but live as merry as the maids, and divide the year between the town and the country. — What say you, is't a match ? your bed is big enough for two, and my meat will not cost you much :

512 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

I'll promise nothing but one heart, one purse betwixt us, and a whole dozen of boys. Is't a bargain?

Widow.

Not, if I can hinder it, as I live.

Wild.

Faith, Mrs. Pleasant, he hath spoken nothing but reason, and I'll do my best to make it good: come, faith, teach my aunt what to do, and let me strike the bargain upon your lips.

Pleasant.

No, sir, not to be half a queen; if we should yield now, your wit would domineer for ever; and still in all disputes (tho' never so much reason on our side) this shall be urg'd as an argument of your master-wit to confute us: I am of your aunt's mind, sir, and, if I can hinder it, it shall be no match.

Wild.

Why, then know, it is not in your powers to prevent it.

Widow.

Why? we are not married yet.

Cartlefs.

No, 'tis true.

Widow.

By this good light then, I'll be dumb for ever hereafter, lest I light upon the words of marriage by chance.

Pleasant.

'Tis hard, when our own acts cannot be in our own power, gentlemen.

Wild.

The plot is only known to four; the minister, and two that stood for fathers, and a simple country-maid that waited upon you last night, which plays your chamber-maid's part.

Pleasant.

And what will all these do?

Wild.

Why, the two friends will swear they gave you, the parson will swear he married you, and the wench will swear she put us to-bed.

Widow.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 513

Widow.

Have you men to swear we are married ?

Pleasant.

And a parson to swear he did it ?

Both.

Yes.

Widow.

And a wench that will swear she put us to bed ?

Both.

Yes, by this good light, and witness of reputation.

Pleasant.

Dare they, or you, look us in the face, and swear this ?

Careless.

Yes, faith ; and all but those four know no other but really it is so ; and you may deny it ; but I'll make Mr. constable put you to-bed, with this proof, at night.

Widow.

Pray, let's see these witnesses.

Wild.

Call in the four only.

[*Exit Careless.*]

Pleasant.

Well, this shall be a warning to me : I say nothing, but if ever I lie from home again —

Wild.

I'll lie with you.

Pleasant.

'Tis well. I dare say we are the first women (if this take) that ever were stolen against their wills.

Wild.

I'll go call the gentlemen.

[*Exit Wild.*]

Widow.

I that have refus'd a fellow that lov'd me these seven years, and would have put off his hat, and thank'd me to come to bed, to be beaten with watchmen's staves into another's ! — for by this good light, for aught that I perceive, there's no keeping these out at night.

Pleasant.

And unless we consent to be their wives to-day, Mr. Justice will make us their whores at night. Oh, oh, what

314 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

would not I give to come off! not that I dislike them, but I hate they should get us thus.

Enter Wild, Jolly, Captain, Careless, Parson, Wanton, with rosemary in their hands, and points in their hats.

Careless.

Follow. — Will not you two swear we were married last night?

Jolly, Captain.

Yes, by this light, will we.

Wild.

Will you not swear you married us?

Parson.

Yea, verily.

Careless.

And come hisher, pretty one; Will not you swear you left us all a-bed last night, and pleas'd?

Wanton.

Yes, forsooth; I'll swear any thing your worship shall appoint me.

Widow.

But, gentlemen, have you no shame, no conscience? Will you swear false for sport?

Jolly.

By this light, I'll swear, if it be but to vex you: remember you refus'd me. [That is contrary to covenants tho' with my brace of lovers: what will they do with their coachman's plot? but 'tis no matter, I have my ends; and so they are cozen'd, I care not who does it.]

[Speaks these words mark'd aside.]

Captain.

And, faith, madam, I have sworn many times false to no purpose; and I should take it ill, if it were mine own case, to have a friend refuse me an oath upon such an occasion.

Pleasant.

And are you all of one mind?

Parson.

Verily, we will all swear.

Pleasant.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 515

Pleasant.

Will you verily? What shall we do, aunt?

[*Pleasant laughs.*]

Widow.

Do you laugh? by this light, I am heartily angry.

Pleasant.

Why, as I live, let's marry them, aunt, and be reveng'd.

Widow.

Marry! Where's the Parson?

Captain.

Here, here; Mr. Parson, come and do your office.

Pleasant.

That fellow! no, by my troth, let's be honeftly join'd, for luck's fake; we know not how soon we may part.

Widow.

What shall we do for a parson? Captain, you must run and fetch one.

Captain.

Yes, yes; but methinks this might serve turn; by this hand, he's a *Marshal*, and a *Cafe*³⁰, by fire and dam; pray try him; by this light, he comes of the best preaching kind in Essex.

Widow.

Not I, as I live; that were a blessing in the devil's name.

Parson.

A pox on your wedding! give me my wife, and let me be gone.

Captain.

Nay, nay, no choler, parson; the ladies do not like the colour of your beard.

Parson.

No, no, fetch another, and let them escape with that trick, then they'll jeer your beards blue, i'faith.

30 — A *Marshal* and a *Cafe*.] *Stephen Marshal* and — *Cafe*, two of the most celebrated divines amongst the Presbyterians. *Marshal* was the person who preached the famous sermon before the House of Commons, Feb. 13, 1641, from Judges c. 5. v. 28. *Curse ye Meroz, &c.* This sermon is mentioned by *Lord Clarendon*. Both these Sectaries are noticed by *Butler*. See *Dr. Grey's edition of Hudibras*, p. 3. c. 1. l. 884. p. 3. c. 2. l. 636, and the notes.

516 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Careless.

By this hand, he's in the right; either this parson, or take one another's words: to bed now, and marry when we rise.

Pleasant.

As I live, you come not here till you are married; I have been no body's whore yet, and I will not begin with my husband.

Wild.

Will you kiss upon the bargain, and promise before these witnesses not to spoil our jest, but rise and go to church?

Pleasant.

And what will Mr. Constant and Mr. Sad say?

Captain.

Why, I'll run and invite them to the wedding; and you shall see them expire in their own garters.

Jolly.

No, no, ne'er fear't, their jest is only spoil'd.

Captain.

Their jest! what jest?

Jolly.

Faith, now you shall know it, and the whole plot: in the first place, your coachman is well, whose death, we, by the help of Secret, contriv'd, thinking by that trick to prevent this danger, and carry you out of town.

Captain.

But had they this plot?

Jolly.

Yes, faith; and see how it thrives! they'll fret like sarted bawds when they hear this news.

Pleasant.

Why, aunt, would you have thought Mr. Sad a plotter? well, 'tis some comfort we have them to laugh at.

Widow.

Nay, faith, then, gentlemen, give us leave to rise, and I'll take my venture, if it be but for a revenge on them.

Careless.

Gentlemen, bear witness.

Captain.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 517

Captain.

Come, come away, I'll get the points ; I'm glad the coachman's well ; the rogue had like to have spoil'd our comedy.

[Exeunt omnes.]

SCENE III.

Enter the lady Loveall ; master Sad and Constant, undress'd, and buttoning themselves as they go.

Sad.

Married ?

Constant.

And to them ?

Loveall.

Ay, married, if you prevent it not ; catch'd with a trick, an old stale trick ; I have seen a ballad on't.

Sad.

We shall go near to prevent 'em. — Boy, my sword.

Enter Captain.

Captain.

Whither so fast ?

Sad.

You guefs.

Captain.

If you mean the wedding, you come too late.

Constant.

Why, are they married ?

Captain.

No, but lustily promised.

Sad.

We may come time enough to be reveng'd tho' —

Captain.

Upon whom ? yourselves, for you are only guilty : who

L 1 3

carry'd

318 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

carry'd them thither last night ? who laid the plot for the coachman ?

Sad.

Why, do they know it ?

Loveall.

Well, you'll find the poet a rogue, 'tis he that has betray'd you ; and if you'll take my counsel, be reveng'd upon him.

Constant.

Nay, we were told he did not love us.

Captain.

By my life, you wrong him : upon my knowledge the poet meant you should have them.

Sad.

Why, who had the power to hinder, then ?

Captain.

I know not where the fault lies directly ; they say, the wits of the town would not consent to't ; they claim a right in the ladies, as orphan-wits.

Constant.

The wits ! hang 'em in their strong lines.

Captain.

Why, ay, such a clinch as that has undone you ; and upon my knowledge 'twere enough to hinder your next match.

Sad.

Why, what have they to do with us ?

Captain.

I know not what you have done to disoblige them ; but they cross'd it ; there was amongst 'em too a pair of she-wits, something stricken in years ; they grew in fury at the mention of it, and concluded you both with an authority out of a modern author ; besides, 'tis said, you run naturally into the six-penny room and steal sayings, and a discourse more than your penny-worth of jests every term. Why, just now, you spit out one jest stolen from a poor play, that has but two more in five acts ; what conscience is there in't, knowing how dear we pay poets for our plays ?

Constant.

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 319

Constant.

'Twas madam with the ill face, one of those whom you refused to salute the other day at Chipp's house; a cheese-cake had fav'd all this.

Loveall.

Why do you not make haste about your business, but lose time with this babbler?

Sad.

Madam, will you give us leave to make use of your coach?

Loveall.

You may command it, fir; when you have done, send him to the Exchange, where I'll dispatch a little business, and be with you immediately.

[Exeunt all but the Captain.]

Captain.

So, this fire is kindled; put it out that can. What would not I give for a peeper's place at the meeting? I'll make haste, and it shall go hard but I'll bear my part of the mirth too.

[Exit.]

SCENE IV.

Enter Widow, Pleasant, Careless, Wild, Parson, Jolly, Wanton, and Secret: the fiddlers play as they come in.

Parson.

MAfter Jolly, I find I am naturally inclin'd to mirth this day, and methinks my horns ach more than my horns; and to a man that has read Seneca, a cuckold ought to be no grief; especially in this parish, where I see such droves of St. Luke's cloathing. There's little Secret too, th' allay of waiting-woman, makes me hope, she may prove metal of the parson's standard. Find a way to rid me of Wanton, and I'll put in to be chaplain to this merry family; if I did not inveigle formal Secret, you should hang me. I know the trick on't; 'tis but praying

L 14

to,

to, and preaching of the waiting-woman, then carefully seeing her cushion laid, with her book and leaf turn'd down, does it, with a few anagrams, acrosticks, and her name in the register of my bible; these charm the soft-soul'd sinner: then sometimes to read a piece of my sermon, and tell her, a Saturday, where my text shall be, 'tells that work more than philtres.

Jolly.

If you can be serious, we'll think of this at leisure. — See how they eye Wanton!

Careless.

What! consulting, parson? let us be judges betwixt you. D'ye hear, Jack? if he offers ready money, I counsel, as a friend, take it; for, by this light, if you refuse it, your wife will not. D'ye see those gay petticoats?

Parson.

Yes, if you mean my wife's.

Careless.

You know they're his, and she only wears 'em for his pleasure; and 'tis dangerous to have a wife under another man's petticoats; What if you should find his breeches upon her?

Parson.

Are not you marry'd too? take care that yours does not wear the breeches, another kind of danger, but as troublesome as that, or sore eyes; and if she get but a trick of taking as readily as she's persuaded to give, you may find a horn at home. I have seen a cuckold of your complexion; if he had had as much hoof as horn, you might have hunted the beast by his flat.

Pleasant.

How fine she is! and by this light, a handsome wench. Mr. Jolly, I am easier persuaded to be reconcil'd to your fault, than any man's I have seen of this kind; her eyes have more arguments in 'em than a thousand of those that seduce the world; hang me if those quivers be not full of darts; I could kiss that mouth myself. Is this she my aunt quarrel'd with you for?

Jolly.

The same, self-same. And, by this hand, I was barbarous

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 321

barous to her, for your aunt's sake ; and had I not 'scap'd that mischief of matrimony, by this light, I had never seen her again ; but I was resolv'd not to quit her, till I was sure of a wife, for fear of what has follow'd. Had I been such an ass as to have left her, upon the airy hopes of a widow's oaths, what a case had I been in now ! You see your aunt's provided of a man. Bless him, and send him patience ! 'Twould have been fine, to have seen me walking, and sighing upon cold hunting, seeking my whore again, or forc'd to make use of some common mercenary thing, that sells sin and diseases, crimes, penance, and sad repentance together ! Here's consolation and satisfaction in Wanton, tho' a man lose his meal with the widow. And faith, be free, how do you like my girl ? Rid thee of her ! What does she want now, pray, but a jointure, to satisfy any honest man ? Speak your conscience, ladies : don't you think a little repentance hereafter will serve for all the small sins that good-nature can act with such a sinner ?

Parson.

Pray, sir, remember she's my wife ; and be so civil to us both, as to forget these things.

Jolly.

For that, Jack, we'll understand hereafter. 'Tis but a trick of youth, man ; and her jest will make us both merry, I warrant thee.

Parson.

Pray, sir, no more of your jests, nor your Jack. Remember my coat and calling. This familiarity, both with my wife and myself, is not decent ; your clergy with Christian names are scarce held good Christians.

Enter Widow.

Widow.

I wonder at nothing so much as Mr. Jolly's mirth to-day ! Where lies his part of the jest ? Cozen'd, or refus'd by all, not a fish that stays in's net.

Jolly.

No ; what's this ? [*Jolly hugs Wanton.*] shew me a fairer in all your dreams. Nor is this my single joy ; who
am

522 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

am pleas'd to find you may be cozen'd; rejoice to see you may be brought to lie with a man for a jest. Let me alone to fit you with a trick too.

Carlefs.

Faith, it must be some new trick; for thou art so beaten at the old one; 'twill neither please thee nor her; besides, I mean to teach her that myself.

Pleasant.

I shall never be perfectly quiet in my mind, till I see somebody as angry as myself: yet, I have some consolation when I think on the wise plot that killed the coachman. How the plague, red-cross, and halberd has cut their fingers that design'd it! their anger will be perfect. Secret says they are coming, and that the lady Loveall has given 'em the alarm.

Enter Sad and Constant.

Wild.

And see where the parties come!—storms and tempests in their minds! their looks are daggers!

Pleasant.

Servant, what? you're melancholy, and full of wonder; I see you have met the news.

Sad.

Yes, madam; we have heard a report that will concern both your judgment and your honour.

Pleasant.

Alas, sir, we're innocent; 'tis mere predestination.

Constant.

All weddings, Mr. Sad, you know, go by chance, like hanging.

Pleasant.

And, I thank my stars, I have 'scap'd hanging. To ha' been his bride had been both.

Constant.

This is not like the promise you made us yesterday.

Widow.

Why truly, servant, I scarce know what I do yet. The fright of the plague had so possess'd my mind with fear,
that

that I could think and dream of nothing last night, but of a tall black man that came and kiss'd me in my sleep, and flapp'd his whip in mine ears. 'Twas a saucy ghost, (not unlike my coachman that's dead) and accus'd you of having a hand in his murder, and vow'd to haunt me till I was married. I told my niece the dream.

Pleasant.

Nay, the ghost sigh'd, and accus'd Secret and Master Sad of making him away. Confess, faith; had you a hand in that bloody jest?

Widow.

Fie, servant! Could you be so cruel as to join with my woman against me?

Constant.

'Tis well, ladies. Why a pox do you look at me? This was your subtle plot; a pox on your clerk's wit. You said the jest would beget a comedy when 'twas known; and so I believe 'twill.

Sad.

Madam, I find you have discover'd our design, whose chief end was to prevent this mischief; which I doubt not, but you'll both live to repent your share of, before you have done travelling to the Epfoms, Burbons, and the Spaws, to cure those travell'd diseases these knights-errant have with curiosity sought out for you. 'Tis true, they are mischiefs that dwell in pleasant countries; yet those roses have their thorns; and I doubt not, but these gentlemen's wit may sting as well as please some time; and you may find it harder to satisfy their travell'd experience than to have suffer'd our homebred ignorance.

Careless.

Hark, if he be not fallen into a fit of his cousin! these names of places he has stolen out of her receipt-book: amongst all whose diseases, find me any so dangerous, troublesome, or incurable, as a fool; a lean, pale, sighing, coughing fool, that's rich and poor both; being born to an estate, without a mind or heart capable to use it; of a nature so miserable, he grudges himself meat; nay, they say, he eats his meals twice: a fellow whose breath smells of yesterday's dinner, and stinks as if he had eat all our

suppers over again. I would advise you, Mr. Sad, to sleep with your mouth open, to air it, or get the brewer to ton it. Foh! an empty justice, that stinks of the lees and casks, and belches Littleton and Plowden's cases! Dost thou think any woman that has wit or honour, would kiss that bung-hole? By this light, his head and belly look as blue and lank as French rabbits, or stale poultry! Alas, sir, my lady would have a husband to rejoice with: no green-tail'd lecturer, to stand sentry at his bedside, while his nasty soul scours thro' him, sneaking out at the back-door!—These, sir, are diseases which neither the Spaw or Bath can cure: your garters and willow are a more certain remedy.

Constant.

Well, sir, I find our plot's betray'd, and we have patience left. 'Tis that damn'd captain has inform'd.

Sad.

Yet 'tis one comfort, madam, that you have mis'd that man of war, that knight of Finsbury. His dowager, with ale and switches, would ha' bred a ballad.

Pleasant.

Faith, sir, you see what a difficulty it is in this age, for a woman to live honest, though she have a proper man for her husband; therefore, it behoves us to consider whom we choose.

Jolly.

The lady has reason: for, being allow'd but one, who would choose such weasels as we see daily marry'd? that are all head and tail, crooked, dirty, fordid vermin, predestin'd for cuckolds, painted snails, with houses on their backs, and horns as big as Dutch cows! Would any woman marry such? Nay, can any woman be honest that lets such hodmandods crawl o'er her virgin-breast and belly, or suffer 'em to leave their slimy paths upon their bodies only for jointures? Out! 'tis mercenary and base! The generous heart has only the laws of nature and kindness in her view; and when she will oblige, Friend is all the ties that Nature seeks; who can both bear and excuse those kind crimes. And I believe, one as poor as the despis'd captain and neglected courtier, may make a woman as happy

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 525

happy in a friendship as Master Sad, who has as many faults as we have debts: one, whose father had no more credit with Nature, than ours had with Fortune; whose soul wears rags as well as the captain's body.

Sad.

Nay then, I'll laugh; for I perceive y'are angrier than we. Alas! h'as lost both ventures; Wanton, and the Widow.

Jolly.

Both; and neither so unlucky as to be thy wife. Thy face is hang'd with blacks already: we may see the bells toll in thy eyes. A bride and a wedding-shirt! a sexton and a winding-sheet. A scrivener to draw up jointures! a parson to make thy will, man. By this light, he's as chap-fallen as if he had lain under the table all night.

Careless.

Faith, master Sad, he's parlously in the right. Ne'er think of marrying in this dull clime. Wedlock's a trade you'll ne'er go thro' with. Wives draw bills upon sight; and 'twill not be for your credit to protest them. Rather follow my counsel, and marry *la Venetiano*, for a night and away; a pistole jointure does it: then, 'tis but repenting in the morning, and leave your woman and the sin both i' th' bed. But if you play the fool, like your friends, and marry in serious earnest, you may repent it too, as they do; but where's the remedy?

Widow.

What was't you said, fir? Do you repent?

Careless.

By this hand, widow, I don't know: but we have pursu'd a jest a great way. Parson, are you sure we are married?

Parson.

Yes, I warrant you, for their escaping.

Careless.

Their escaping! Fool, thou mistak'st me; there's no fear of that! But I would fain know, if there be no way for me to get out of this noose? no hole to hide a man's head in from this wedlock?

Parson.

26. THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

Parson.

Not any, but what I presume she'll shew you anon.

Careless.

Hum! now do I feel all my fears flowing in upon me, Wanton and Mrs. Pleasant both grow dangerously handsome. A thousand graces in each, I never observ'd before now, just now. When I must not taste, I begin to long for some of their plumbs.

Widow.

Is this serious, sir?

Careless.

Yes, truly, widow, sadly serious. Is there no way to get three or four mouthfuls of kisses from the Parson's wife?

Widow.

This is sad, sir, upon my wedding-day, to despise me for such a common thing.

Sad.

As sad, as I could wish. This is a jest makes me laugh. — Common! No, madam, that's too bitter; she's forest only, where the royal chace is as free as fair.

Wanton.

Were not you a widow to-day?

Sad.

Yes, faith, girl, and as foolish a one as ever coach jumbled out of joint.

Wanton.

Stay then till to-morrow, and tell me the difference betwixt us.

Sad.

I hope, thou'lt prove a she-prophet. Could I live to see thee turn honest wife, and she the wanton widow!

Wanton.

I cannot but laugh, to see how easy it is to lose or win the opinion of the world. A little custom heals all, or else what's the difference betwixt a married widow and one of us? Can any woman be pure, or worth the serious fighting of a generous heart, that has had above one hand laid upon her? Is there place to write above one lover's name with honour in her heart? 'Tis indeed for one a royal

THE PARSON'S WEDDING. 527

royal palace; but if it admits of more, an hospital, or an inn at best, as well as ours; only off from the road and less frequented.

Pleasant.

Shrewdly urg'd.

Wanton.

And tho' the sins of my family threw me into want, and made me subject to the treachery of that broken faith to whose perjury I owe all my crimes, yet still I can distinguish betwixt that folly and this honour, which must tell you, *he or she that would be thought twice so, was never once a lover.*

Constant.

Parson, thou art fitted; a whore and apothegms! What sport will she make us under a tree with a fallad, and sayings, in the summer!

Wild.

Come, Wanton, no fury; you see my aunt's angry.

Wanton.

So am I, sir, and yet can calmly reason this truth: Marry'd widows, tho' chaste to the law and custom, yet their second Hymens make that which was but dying in the first husband's bed, a stain in the second's sheets; where all their kindness and repeated embraces want their value, because they're fully'd, and have lost their lustre.

Sad.

By this light, I'll go to school to Wanton; she has open'd my eyes, and I begin to believe I have 'scap'd miraculously. By this hand, wench, I was within an inch of being marry'd to this danger. For what can we call these second submissions, but a tolerated lawful mercenariness, which tho' it be a rude and harsh expression, yet your carriage deserves it?

Pleasant.

Fie, master Sad! pray leave being witty. I fear 'tis a mortal sin, to begin in the fifth act of your days, upon an old subject too, abusing of widows, because they despise you.

Widow.

Alas, niece, let him alone, he may come in for his share.

528 THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

share; the Parson that has so oft receiv'd 'em, will not refuse him tythes there, in charity.

Wanton.

That, or conveniency, interest, or importunity, may, by your example, prevail: but 'tis not fair play, madam, to turn your lover to the common, as you call it, now he's rid lean in your service. Take heed, Mr. Careless, and warning, Mr. Sad; you see how fit for the scavenger's team your lady leaves her lovers!

Careless.

Such a lecture before I had married, would ha' made me have consider'd of this matter. Do'st thou hear, Wanton? Let us forgive one another being marry'd, for that folly has made us guilty alike.

Wanton.

And I would fain know the difference betwixt ours and a wedding crime, which is worst: to let love, youth, and good-humour, betray us to a kindness; or to be gravely seduc'd by some aunt or uncle, without consideration of the disparity of age, birth, or persons, to lie down before a jointure. Ladies, you may flatter yourselves; but the ingenuous part of the world cannot deny, but such minds, had they been born where our faults are not only tolerated but protected, would have listen'd to the same things: interest counsels thereto.

Careless.

Parson, what boot betwixt our wives? Either come to a price, or draw off your doxy.

Parson.

Propose, propose: here will be mirth anon.

Sad.

Yes, yes, propose, while I break it to your lady. Madam, you see, here's a proper man to be had, and money to boot.—What, dumb?

Wanton.

No, she's only thinking. Faith, madam, try 'em both to-night, and choose to-morrow.

Wild.

Come, no more of this. Aunt, take my word for your husband, that have had more experience of him than all these:

these; 'tis true, he will long for these girls, as children do for plumbs; and when he's done, make a meal upon cheese. And you must not wonder nor quarrel at what he says in his humour, but judge him by his actions; and when he is in his fit, and raves most, put him into your bed, and fold him close in your arms, aunt: if he does not rise as kind and as good a husband as he that sings psalms best, hang me!—Why, you're a fool, aunt: a widow, and dislike a longing bridegroom! I thought you had known better. Do you love a spurr'd horse rather than a duker, that neighs and scrapes?—I would not say this, but that I know him. Let him not go out of your sight, for he's now in season; a ripe mature husband. No delays: if you let him hang longer upon hope, his fruit will fall alone.

Widow.

You are merry, sir: but if I had known this humour—

Wild.

You'd ha' kiss'd him first; but being ignorant, let me make you blase. Come, a kiss, and all's friends. [*She kisses Careless, and he kisses her twice.*]—How now, sir! again! again! Aunt, look to yourself.

Careless.

Um! By this light, sweetheart, and I thank thee. Nay, widow, there's no jesting with these things—[*Kisses her again.*] nay, I am a lion, in my love. Aware, puss, if you flatter me, for I shall deceive you.

Parson.

Since all are cozen'd, why should I be troubled at my fortune? Faith, gentlemen, what will you two give me for a wife, betwixt you?

Constant.

Faith, they're mischiefs dear bought, though a man get 'em for nothing.

Parson.

I'm almost of his mind; and if other people find no more pleasure in a marry'd life than I upon my wedding-day, I'd pass my time in the Piazza, with the mountebank, and let him practise upon my teeth, and draw 'em too, ere he persuades the words of matrimony out of my mouth again. Ay, ay, Mr. Constant, you may laugh, you ha'

534. THE PARSON'S WEDDING.

genius lies that way;) tell him, 'tis expected he should be revenged upon the illiterate courtier that made this play. If you can bring this business about, I may find a way, as Epilogue, to be thankful, though the captain abus'd you to-day. Think on't; Stephen is as handsome when the play is done, as Mr. Wild was in the scene.

Loveall.

There's something of reason in what he says.—But, my friend, how shall one believe you? you that were such a rascal to-day, in buff, is it to be hoped you can be honest only with putting on a black cloak? Well, I'll venture once again; and if I have any power, he shall sting the malicious rascal; and I think he is fit for such a business. I'm sure he has the worst tongue; and a conscience that neither honour nor truth binds; and therefore 'tis to be believed, if he will rail in publick, he may be even with your poet; I will cloath and feed him and his muse this seven years, but I will plague him: Secret tells me, 'twas your poet too that pawn'd me, to-day, in the tavern.

Captain.

By my faith, did he; nay, 'twas he that told me of your friendship with Jolly.

Loveall.

I wonder the parson has been so long silent; a man of his coat and parts, to be beaten with a pen, by one that speaks sense by rote, like parrots! one that knows not why sense is sense, but by the sound! one that can scarce read, nay, not his own hand! Well, remember your promise.

Captain.

Leave it to me, he is your's; and if our plot take, you shall all have your shares in the mirth; but not the profit of the play; and the parson, more than his tythe, a second day.

Loveall.

We will discourse of this some other time; and pray dispatch what 'tis you have to say to this noble company, that I may be gone; for these gentlemen will be in such
fury,

fury, if I stay ; and think, because we are alone, God knows what.

Captain.

'Tis no matter what they think, 'tis not them we are to study now, but these guests ; to whom pray address yourself civilly, and beg that they would please to become fathers, and give those brides within.—What say you, gentlemen, will you lend your hands to join them ? the match, you see, is made ; if you refuse, Stephen misses the wench, and then you cannot justly blame the poet ; for you know, they say, that alone is enough to spoil the play.